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READING:  
HOW TO TEACH IT.



# Reading: How To Teach It

By

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Stones to Literature," "Waymarks  
for Teachers," etc.



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## GREETING.

*The teacher of children must know how to guide her work so that the seemingly trivial beginnings shall tend toward a goal whose attainment is worth striving for. Hers is a day of small things. The child does not see the end from the beginning, but the teacher must, and the constant recognition of the desired object must influence her simplest lesson.*

*These pages are written in the hope of helping teachers to appreciate the true import of the familiar task. They attempt to interpret and to dignify the commonplace routine. They have grown out of thoughtful experience, and are sent forth with good will, to their service.*

SARAH LOUISE ARNOLD.

*Boston, Mass.,  
July, 1899.*



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*Consider what you have in the smallest chosen library. A company of the wisest and wittiest men that could be picked out of all civil countries, in a thousand years, have set in best order the results of their learning and wisdom. The men themselves were hidden and inaccessible, solitary, impatient of interruption, fenced by etiquette; but the thought that they did not uncover to their bosom friend is here written out in transparent words to us, the strangers of another age. We owe to books those general benefits which come from high intellectual action. Thus, I think, we often owe to them the perception of immortality. They impart sympathetic activity to the moral power. Go with mean people, and you think life is mean. Then read Plutarch, and the world is a proud place, peopled with men of positive quality, with heroes and demi-gods standing around us, who will not let us sleep. Then they address the imagination: only poetry inspires poetry. They become the organic culture of the time. College education is the reading of certain books which the common sense of all scholars agrees will represent the science already accumulated. In the highest civilization, the book is still the highest delight.*

**RALPH WALDO EMERSON.**



# READING: HOW TO TEACH IT.

## CHAPTER I.

### WHY DO WE READ ?

THE power to read is so ordinary a part of our mental equipment that we rarely question its meaning or its origin. All common things pass us unchallenged, however marvellous they may be. We take little note of our sunrises and sunsets, the hill range which we see every day from our window, the clear air which infuses new energies into our lives with every new morning. Common institutions, however precious—the

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home, the school, the church, the state—are received by us as a matter of course, just as children receive without surprise the most valuable gifts from the hands of their friends. We need not marvel, then, that this power, which has so long been a part of ourselves, should remain unquestioned, or that we learn to read without giving a thought to the motive which impels us to learn. It may be well for even the most thoughtful among us to pause for a moment to question why everybody learns to read; to ponder the returns from the effort, the time, and the pains spent in the mastery of the art.

It is evident that our estimate of the value of reading will depend upon our kind of reading ; or, in other words, the kind of knowledge which we gain from reading. For example, you and I may turn to the daily newspaper for a certain

knowledge to direct our everyday plans. We wish to go to the city on the morrow:—this evening's paper warns us of an approaching rain; we therefore provide ourselves with an umbrella before starting on our journey. Or we desire to hear Nansen's lecture:—the newspaper apprises us of the time, the place, the subject, the cost of tickets, the place where they are to be sold, the arrangement for extra trains. Or, again, we plan a trip to Florida:—the ways and means of going, the departure and arrival of trains, the choice of routes, the cost of the journey, the hotels which we may expect to find, together with a thousand other items,—all these are learned by means of time-tables, guide-books, and printed pamphlets, which we carefully read before going. Without this information which has been written down for us, and without this power on

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our part to read it, our journey would be to us like that of a traveller in an unexplored country, except as our friends give us the result of their experience. The business man consults the paper to learn of the quotations of stocks and bonds, the arrival or departure of ships, the scarcity or abundance of crops. The enthusiastic bicyclist learns of the proposed runs of the club through the obliging columns of the paper; his guide-book supplies the directions which take him safely to his journey's end, or the descriptions which interpret to him the places through which he rides. Can we imagine ourselves as bereft of this power of reading the printed directions which are every day consulted by us for our ordinary convenience? How limited, how hindered our lives would seem to us with this power withdrawn!

Through the various agencies to which we have referred, and similar sources equally familiar to us, we share the experience of others and add to our limited life that which they have learned for us. Our power is multiplied, our convenience is assured, our happiness is increased by means of the work which has been done by others. The fruit of others' thought and experience is stored ready for our use as soon as we have mastered the art of reading. Therefore, in order that we may add to our own power by sharing the experience and wisdom of others in the management of our everyday, practical affairs, we have learned to read.

And, furthermore, as members of a community we need to know what others are doing. We cannot live to ourselves alone. Ordinary intelligence demands a knowledge of contemporary events. A strike in the Fall River mills, a freshet

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in the Connecticut Valley, a cyclone in Iowa, a frost in Florida, a famine or a pestilence in India, a war in Cuba, the threatened partition of China, the accession of Hawaii, are matters which pertain to us also. In these days of rapid transmission of intelligence, the world has become one great family, and in proportion as one recognizes his responsibility to the brotherhood of which he is a member, he will be interested to know the deeds of other men, the happenings in other communities. These exert a direct influence upon our own environment. Therefore we read to obtain knowledge of the life about us, in countries near and remote; and in proportion as our interest is wide and intelligent does such reading become a necessity to us.

Moreover, an intelligent judgment of the events of the present involves a

knowledge of the past, which to so large a degree determines the present. What men have done, what they have discovered, what they have thought, in the ages that are past, enables us to interpret the present. A complete knowledge of our own time is the possession only of the man who can read the past. The history of any nation, the development of any art or science, the growth of any religion can be known only to him who reads. The student of his own times must turn to the life of the yesterdays for answers to the problems which are confronting him. The experience of the past has been chronicled in books in order that we may share the blessings of that experience. How narrow seems the life of the person who is without the power to read even the outlines of that history! We have but to imagine the books of the past as closed



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to the entire world, and the power of reading as cut off from every one, to realize the individual loss when the power of thus reading is withheld. It is a recognized truth that the broader one's life, the greater his consciousness of the necessity for general knowledge such as is gained from books.

A fourth type of reading is suggested by the ministrations of literature. If we imagine ourselves as seated by the study table reading our favorite poem, we shall recognize that it has been through the reading of literature that much of our highest inspiration has come to us. It is the poet who brings to us true insight into our own experience, who interprets for us the great problems of life. With what joy and exultation we recall our magnificent hymns! What waves of emotion sweep over us as we read the lines in which

the master hand has recorded the deepest experiences! For enjoyment, for culture, for spiritual help we turn to the higher order of books. In the truest sense, this reading directs our lives, interprets our experiences, and determines our ideals. We cannot imagine ourselves as defrauded of this birth-right. How meagre would our lives at once become if every vestige of the treasures of literature was removed from our experience:—the army without the battle hymn, the home without the poem, the struggle without the psalm of courage, the mortal defeat without the inspiring shout of spiritual triumph! In attempting thus to picture a life without the inspiration of literature, we realize our dependence upon its teachings. The higher our conception of living, the fuller our realization of the help which comes to us through literature.

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Our motives in reading, then, may be recorded in an ascending series: To obtain practical guidance in everyday affairs; to enrich our lives with the experience of our neighbors; to share the wisdom resulting from the experience of the past; to gain pleasure, insight, and spiritual direction. Any one of these motives would be sufficient to warrant us in teaching reading; through any one of these results we are fitted to become better members of the community. But can we draw the line, giving to our children the lower results only, where so much might well be given?

We have asked why we read, and the question which naturally follows is: "What shall we read?" We must be able to read ordinary facts affecting our everyday life, expressed in the terms of that life. Such reading involves little

growth. Its purposes are exceedingly practical in the ordinary sense of the term. There is little widening of our horizon, little deepening of our experience in consequence of such practice. Second, we should read such books and papers as will serve to inform us of contemporary events,—such events as really have a bearing upon our present environment or the life of the future. This reading gives us knowledge of other peoples and places, widening our horizon, and urging us back to study, with clearer eyes, the environment which has been constantly about us. Only thus can we truly see the life which is nearest to us. Third, the reading of the past leads us to the pages of history in which the best has been chronicled. As has been said, the knowledge of the present can be obtained only through the interpretation of the past. That

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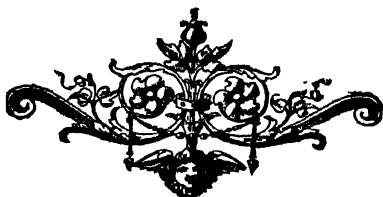
life is narrow indeed which confines its range to the present alone. And fourth, we must be able to read and interpret literature, a reading which requires a fuller power than any which has been heretofore described, and involves a higher type of teaching.

In the thought of many parents and friends of the school, the immediately practical aim of reading is the only one considered. Because reading facilitates buying and selling, coming and going, and is ordinarily accepted as a mark of intelligence, it is considered as an essential in our school courses. But the higher our conception of life, the higher will be our conception of education ; and with the higher conception of education comes the acceptance of the higher aim, even in our simplest teaching. We may learn to read in such a way that we never rise beyond the first result of our

attainment. This will almost assuredly be the case if the so-called "practical" aim is the only one considered; but if, from the beginning, the teacher's hope and that of the parent are that the child may grow into fuller power, we shall find his life strengthened and inspired by the loftier aim, by the surer accomplishment of the greater result. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." The old saying is far from being interpreted in these days of hurrying to obtain the immediate and the practical,—but it is forever true that as our aim becomes higher, the type of our work becomes nobler, while the character of the results justifies our endeavors. The greater will include the less, but the lower aim may never lead to the higher. Can we dare to withhold from our children the comfort, the

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inspiration, the strength, the guidance that has come to us through the higher type of reading? Is it not a necessity that, from the beginning, they shall be taught to look forward to such power of acquisition as shall open to them the treasures of experience which have been written down for them in the best books?







*It is as undesirable as it is impossible to try to feed the minds of children only upon facts of observation or record. The immense product of the imagination in art and literature is a concrete fact with which every educated being should be made somewhat familiar, such products being a very real part of every individual's actual environment. . . . Do we not all know many people who seem to live in a mental vacuum—to whom we have great difficulty in attributing immortality, because they apparently have so little life except that of the body? Fifteen minutes a day of good reading would give any one of this multitude a really human life. "The uplifting of the democratic masses depends upon the implanting at schools of the taste for good reading."*

**CHARLES W. ELIOT.**



## CHAPTER II.

### LITERATURE IN THE SCHOOL-ROOM.

**L**EARNING to read is an important part of the children's training, but learning *what* to read is quite as important. A child's mastery of the printed page may leave him with the key to that which is base and ignoble in literature, or it may open to him that which is noble and inspiring. His newly gotten power may unlock to him the dime novel, or the Iliad. Whether he turns to the one or to the other depends largely upon his early associations. It is determined especially by his early teaching.

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To present the right standard or pattern is one of the functions of the teacher. This is equally true whether the lesson be the form of a Latin verb, the shape of a vase, the polite fashion of address, or the choice of books. To set the copy was of old the teacher's part, and it must still occupy a prominent place in our work. For the sake of giving the children right ideals, we must place before them the best in literature, such literature as will supply not only standards in language, but ideals in character. Their experience, like ours, must be reënforced by the teachings of others—the lessons which have been treasured in books—and these lessons must begin in childhood. It is a mistake to postpone good literature until the child has mastered word forms and the technique of reading. His love for the good must exist before he begins to

read at all, and must be stimulated and strengthened by means of his reading. At the same time that he becomes master of the mechanics of reading, he should be endowed with the desire to choose that which is good to read. The work of the teacher, therefore, is to establish ideals, to quicken desire, to strengthen right tendencies, to lead to wise choices. These belong to the teaching of reading, and should assume quite as important a place as does the mastery of words, or fluency in expression.

As has been said, good literature should not be postponed until the children can read it for themselves. A study of our own experience will assure us that the teachings of our childhood have made the most lasting impression upon us. It is the childhood association which moves us most strongly to-day. As the twig is bent the tree is

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inclined. There comes a time in the tree's history when its inclination is fixed. It is the young tree which is shaped by the skill of the nurseryman. The best of poems should be read and recited to little children. "Tell me a story," or "Read to me," is the oft-repeated plea in the home. It indicates the child's desire, and his need as well. Let us be taught by the children. Here is our opportunity to present to them the story that is worth telling, the poem that is worth reading. "Tell it again," we hear, after every recital, and again and again and again the loved story is repeated. Should we not be assured that the oft-heard word is worthy of this frequent repetition? If the child asks for bread, shall we give him a stone?

In the home, long before the child enters school, he should become familiar with true stories, fairy stories, exquisite

songs, beautiful poems, adapted to his intelligence, suited to his interest. If this good work has been done at home it should be continued by the teacher. If it has been neglected by the home friends, it necessarily becomes a part of the teacher's work. The child's mind should be furnished with the best stories and poems before he begins his primer. So shall he long to master the art which shall open books to him for his own reading, and every step which his baby feet take in the path to his desire shall bring him consciously nearer to the longed-for treasure.

Through the first years of the school life, telling stories, reciting poems, or reading to the children should be a frequent exercise. This may occur in the time of the reading lesson, in the language lesson, or the morning talk. The benefits derived from this practice are

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two-fold. The stories and the poems give to the children new material for thought; they also help them to acquire a taste for good things which will cause them to choose instinctively that which is good when they are left free to choose. Children who have been accustomed to the stories of the Iliad, will read and re-read this treasure in later life with an advantage which could not have been theirs had not the heroes of the old story been the companions of their childhood's thought. We can hardly imagine that boys accustomed to such associations will be satisfied with the cheap and pernicious pages of the dime novel. A mind well furnished with good things will appropriate good to itself. It is the empty head which becomes filled with that which is cheap and mean. The children of a certain city were once asked without previous

notice to write down something which they had memorized. Those who had not been taught in school to memorize choice selections, wrote pages of curious and uncouth rhymes, which they had learned in various ways. The exercise proved conclusively that they must be helped to choose wisely. The choice will never be between the good and nothing, fulness and emptiness: it will always be a choice between the good and the bad.

Let us read to the children, then. Let their own desires guide our selection in the beginning. The true story, the fairy story, the poem, may be read or recited in turn. The children's plea for repetition will teach us what their present choice is. If we are wise we shall be instructed by their comments and questions.

Three rules should guide our choice



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of literature: First, give the children what is good. Second, give them what we like. Third, give them what they like.

The first rule needs no interpretation. With so much that is precious waiting to be taught, we cannot be satisfied with any lesson material worthless in itself. Life is too short and its time too sacred to admit of such harmful dallying.

The second rule is always a safe one. We must teach that which belongs to us. We cannot give to the children what is not ours to give. The poem or story which we enjoy because it answers to something in our nature, we shall be able to teach to them. We may repeat, but we cannot teach, that which has not entered into our own lives. Therefore, if we do not love and appreciate what is good in literature, our

## Literature in the School-Room. 33

first duty is to teach ourselves, in order that we may be prepared to teach the children.

The third rule necessitates a study of the children as well as a study of literature. Songs and stories which are entirely suited to one class may fail to interest another. Those which we like may not attract the children. Hence, we must watch them through our storytelling or our reading, and judge, by their attention, their comments, their silence, their indifference, where their interest lies. We must begin with that which appeals to their child life, their present interest; but we shall not end there. We must lead them to a fuller enjoyment and to a wider interest, by giving them always a little more than that for which they ask.

There is much in the pages of the best literature which is already suited to chil-

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dren's understanding. Let us choose that first. But we shall dare to add much which they do not fully understand as yet, knowing that the future will interpret to them that which is now hidden. It is a mistake to cut literature to the children's comprehension. Let us trust that they will feel in some measure the beauty which they cannot understand, and that their future experience will unlock the door which is now shut to them.

The writer remembers a class of children—children who came from rude homes, whose lives were narrow and hindered, who, nevertheless, listened with intense interest to the poems which their teacher read to them. It happened that she once selected for the morning reading the first stanzas of Longfellow's poem, "My Lost Youth." They listened eagerly until the book

was closed, giving evidence of appreciation with every return of the rhythmic refrain. "Is that all?" they asked. "No," was the reply, "but you would not understand the rest." "Oh, read it to us, even if we don't," they urged. "We love the sound of it."

The writer has often heard primary classes reciting Wordsworth's "Daffodils" with great delight. Without doubt the child's interpretation differs from that of the man,—understanding is the fruit of experience,—but even thus early the children enter into the spirit of the poem, rejoice in the beauty of the daffodils, and are happy in the rhythmic recitation. The beautiful words are treasured in their memories, to return again and again to gladden their hearts, just as the bright vision was repeated in the experience of the poet.

Give to the children, then, not only

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the child thought which fits the childish experience, but also the treasure which grows in beauty as they grow, and becomes rich as they become wise.

It is well for the teacher to cultivate the art of telling stories to children. The story that is told has an element of life which is not found in the story that is read. There is no barrier between the story-teller and his audience; the book often makes a gulf between the reader and his hearers. Practise story-telling. Let the children's indifference teach you wherein you fail; your unconscious tutors will show you what to omit and what to magnify. Their training will help you in other directions. If you yield yourself to the teaching of the children, you will be repaid by a new readiness in story-telling before less kindly and less candid critics. Do not forego this privilege.

It is well to read and re-read the poem or story until it becomes the child's own possession. The term "Memory Gem" has been adopted into our familiar school phrases. Whether the phrase remains or not, it is to be hoped that the exercise which it names will always have a place. It has an advantage beyond simply reading or hearing the poem. The poem which has been committed to memory and recited again and again, becomes the child's own. It will recur to him at his play, at his work, in school and out. No other thought treasure is so dear to us as that which is learned in childhood, and which accompanies us through life. Through such indirect teaching, we may remain an influence for good even when our names have been forgotten. By means of such tuition the child becomes familiar with the vocabulary of good literature, and is

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prepared to read, understand, and enjoy that which would otherwise have been beyond his reach. By all means continue the "memory gem," but be assured that the selections are truly gems.

A poem or story may be presented to a child as a message from the author to him. Whittier's "Barefoot Boy," for example, serves not only to describe the barefoot boy, but to tell the children something about the poet himself. If they read it with this thought in mind, they will be desirous of learning something about the poet. This study of the author should not precede the study of the poem. They will care to learn about Whittier because he has written this charming poem for them; now, facts about his life will be filled with meaning; they will rejoice in the story of his boyhood experience, and will return to

“The Barefoot Boy” with a keener interest, because it has become real to them through their study of the poet’s life. For little children (and is it not true of grown-up children as well?) this is the natural order of teaching. We care to know about Scott because we delight in “Marmion” and “Ivanhoe”; we do not first learn about the author, and then decide to read his works.

Other things being equal, our selections for reading and for memorizing should be from the world’s best writers. We should at least be sure that the children’s course of reading gives them some sense of companionship with a few men and women who have blessed the world through their books. Hans Christian Andersen, Alice and Phoebe Cary, Mary Howitt, Longfellow, Whittier, Lowell, Robert Louis Stevenson, and Eugene Field have written some of



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their best thoughts for children as well as for men and women. Some of these names should stand for real personalities, nay, for friends, to the children, before they leave school.

One question is often asked by teachers: "Shall I give myths to the children, and how? and can I give them if I do not believe them nor like them at all myself?" Somewhere, sometime, somehow, the children should become familiar with the classic myths. The "sometime" should be in childhood, or the myths will never fulfil their true mission. They should come at the time when children delight in the marvellous, the fanciful, the grotesque. Rightly used, they help to develop the imagination, a power which is left sadly to itself in school life. They serve as a basis for future reading. A knowledge of them is necessary to the interpreta-

tion of the best in literature. By all means give them to the children, but give them in their best form. They should not be mutilated by any attempt to embody them in words of one syllable. Let the child's reading of the myths wait until he is able to read some version couched in the purest English. Meanwhile, read them to him again and again, sometimes without note or comment, for explanations are often bungling attempts to explain that which can never be explained. Let the child absorb into himself what the story conveys to him. Answer his questions plainly, if you can. Tell him you do not know, if you do not; but do not spoil his visions by attempting to teach vaporized theories.

Enough has been said of the teacher's duty in the direction of developing taste. It is self-evident that no teacher

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can help a child to appreciate that which is beautiful, unless she herself appreciates it. The fountain cannot rise higher than its source. We must be that which we would help the children to become. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance that the teacher's reading be carefully directed. I know of no way in which a teacher can better serve her children than by reading the best books. This reading will be, of course, in the line of her own tastes and interests. Every year, at the least, a new book should become a teacher's possession. She should not only buy it to keep, but she should read and re-read it, until its contents become a part of herself. Every year should widen her horizon, and enable her to see more truly than she has seen before. Every book thus read and re-read becomes a definite force in her life, and uncon-

sciously directs her teaching. The teacher who would guide her pupils in the fields of literature, must herself frequent the paths in which she desires their feet to tread.



*If the crowns of all the kingdoms of the empire were laid down at my feet in exchange for my books and my love of reading, I would spurn them all.*

—FÉNELON.



## CHAPTER III.

### LEARNING TO READ.

THE problem of teaching would be solved could the teacher know how her well-devised plan of action really affects her pupil. Patiently and persistently she follows her foreordained method, but who can know the critical moment when the mind opens to take in the new idea, and to delight in the consciousness of growth? Who can name or describe the Open Sesame that unlocks the world of books to the child?

A clear light is thrown upon our common problem by the charming description of one child's experience. Hugh

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Miller, in his "Schools and Schoolmasters," tells us how he learned to read, or, rather, learned to love reading. We quote at length:—

I had been sent, previous to my father's death, to a dame's school, where I was taught to pronounce my letters to such effect in the old Scottish mode, that still, when I attempt spelling a word aloud, which is not often,—for I find the process a perilous one,—the *aa's*, and *ee's*, and *uh's*, and *rau's*, return upon me, and I have to translate them, with no little hesitation, as I go along, into the more modish sounds. A knowledge of the letters themselves I had already acquired by studying the signposts of the place,—rare works of art, that excited my utmost admiration, with jugs, and glasses, and bottles, and ships, and loaves of bread upon them; all of which could, as the artist intended, be actually recognized. During my sixth year, I spelt my way, under the dame, through the Shorter Catechism, the Proverbs, and the New Testament, and then entered upon her highest form, as a member of the Bible Class; but

all the while, the process of acquiring learning had been a dark one, which I slowly mastered, in humble confidence in the awful wisdom of the schoolmistress, not knowing whither it tended,—when at once my mind awoke to the meaning of that most delightful of all narratives, the story of Joseph. Was there ever such a discovery made before! I actually found out for myself, that the art of reading is the art of finding stories in books, and from that moment reading became one of the most delightful of my amusements. I began by getting into a corner at the dismissal of the school, and there conning over to myself the new-found story of Joseph; nor did one perusal serve; the other Scripture stories followed,—in especial, the story of Samson and the Philistines, of David and Goliath, of the prophets Elijah and Elisha; and after that came the New Testament stories and parables. Assisted by my uncles, I began to collect a library in a box of birch-bark about nine inches square, which I found quite large enough to contain a great many immortal works,—“Jack the Giant-Killer,” and “Jack and the Bean-Stalk,” and the “Yellow Dwarf,” and “Blue Beard,” and “Sind-



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bad the Sailor," and "Beauty and the Beast," and "Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp," with several others of resembling character.

Those intolerable nuisances, the useful-knowledge books, had not yet arisen, like tenebrious stars, on the educational horizon, to darken the world, and shed their blighting influence on the opening intellect of the "youthhood"; and so, from my rudimental books—books that made themselves truly such by their thorough assimilation with the rudimental mind—I passed on, without being conscious of break or line of division, to books on which the learned are content to write commentaries and dissertations, but which I found to be quite as nice children's books as any of the others. Old Homer wrote admirably for little folk, especially in the "Odyssey"; a copy of which, in the only true translation extant,—for, judging from its surpassing interest and the wrath of critics, such I hold that of Pope to be,—I found in the house of a neighbor. Next came the "Iliad"; not, however, in a complete copy, but represented by four of the six volumes of Bernard Lintot. With what power, and at how early an age, true genius

impresses! I saw, even at this immature period, that no writer could cast a javelin with half the force of Homer. The missiles went whizzing athwart his pages; and I could see the momentary gleam of the steel, ere it buried itself deep in brass and bull-hide. I next succeeded in discovering for myself a child's book, of not less interest than even the "Iliad," which might, I was told, be read on Sabbaths, in a magnificent old edition of "Pilgrim's Progress," printed on coarse, whity-brown paper, and charged with numerous woodcuts, each of which occupied an entire page, that, on principles of economy, bore letterpress on the other side. And such delightful prints as these were! It must have been some such volume that sat for its portrait to Wordsworth, and which he so exquisitely describes as

"Profuse in garniture of wooden cuts,  
Strange and uncouth; dire faces, figures dire,  
Sharp-kneed, sharp-elbowed, and lean-  
ankled, too,  
With long and ghastly shanks,—forms  
which, once seen,  
Could never be forgotten."

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In process of time I had devoured, besides these genial works, "Robinson Crusoe," "Gulliver's Travels," "Ambrose on Angels," the judgment chapter in Howie's "Scotch Worthies," Byron's "Narrative," and the "Adventures of Philip Quarll," with a good many other adventures and voyages, real and fictitious, part of a very miscellaneous collection of books made by my father. It was a melancholy little library to which I had fallen heir. Most of the missing volumes had been with the master aboard the vessel when he perished. Of an early edition of Cook's "Voyages," all the volumes were now absent save the first; and a very tantalizing romance in four volumes, Mrs. Ratcliff's "Mysteries of Udolpho," was represented by only the earlier two. Small as the collection was, it contained some rare books,—among the rest, a curious little volume entitled, "The Miracles of Nature and Art," to which we find Dr. Johnson referring, in one of the dialogues chronicled by Boswell, as scarce even in his day, and which had been published, he said, some time in the seventeenth century by a bookseller whose shop hung perched on Old London Bridge, between sky and water. It

contained, too, the only copy I ever saw of the "Memoirs of a Protestant condemned to the Gallies of France for his Religion,"—a work interesting from the circumstance that, though it bore another name on its title-page, it had been translated from the French for a few guineas by poor Goldsmith in his days of obscure literary drudgery, and exhibited the peculiar excellences of his style. The collection boasted, beside, of a very curious old book, illustrated by very uncouth plates, that detailed the perils and sufferings of an English sailor who had spent his best years of life as a slave in Morocco. It had its volumes of sound theology, too, and of stiff controversy, —Flavel's "Works," and Henry's "Commentary," and Hutchinson on the "Lesser Prophets," and a very old treatise on the "Revelation," with the title-page away, and blind Jameson's volume on the "Hierarchy," with first editions of "Naphthali," "The Cloud of Witnesses," and "The Hind let Loose." But with these solid authors I did not venture to grapple until long after this time. Of the works of fact and incident which it contained, those of the voyagers were my especial favorites. I perused with

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avidity the voyages of Anson, Drake, Raleigh, Dampier, and Captain Woods Rogers, and my mind became so filled with conceptions of what was to be seen and done in foreign parts, that I wished myself big enough to be a sailor, that I might go and see coral islands and burning mountains, and hunt wild beasts and fight battles.

These reminiscences are most suggestive. Do they not find a parallel in our memory of our childhood conquest of the art of reading?

Before planning her lessons in reading, the teacher will do well to review her own experience in reading, or to scan the difficulties which she has encountered in teaching other classes. A brief analysis of her experiences, both as a pupil and as a teacher, will reveal distinct lines of achievement in learning to read. These are illustrated in any act of reading.

“ The old familiar sights of ours  
Took marvellous shapes. Strange domes  
and towers  
Rose up where sty and corncrib stood,  
Or garden wall, or belt of wood.  
The bridle post an old man sat,  
With loose-flung coat and high-cocked hat.  
The wellcurb had a Chinese roof,  
And even the tall sweep, high aloof,  
In its slant splendor seemed to tell  
Of Pisa's leaning miracle.”

**To read**,—that is, to get the meaning of these lines ; or, if one reads aloud, to get and to give the meaning. One who truly reads “ Snow-Bound ” learns to see the scenes which Whittier so beautifully describes ; to see them as he saw them, with tender affection, and to interpret the deeper meaning of the lines of “ homely toil and destiny obscure.”

Manifestly this involves much. On the surface, and first attracting the attention of the teacher, appears the obvious

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necessity of knowing the words at sight. Familiarity with the forms of the words used is indispensable to reading. This involves knowing the sounds of the words, while the power to pronounce new words readily calls for knowledge of the laws of English pronunciation.

In the minds of too many teachers of little children, such mastery of word pronunciation is held as reading. But this is a grievous error, which leads to narrow and mechanical work, and obscures the high purpose of real reading. Reference to the definition of reading, and a study of the selection from "Snow-Bound," will show us the proper value of this achievement and its relation to true reading. The words are the vehicle of thought, a means to an end. Their mastery is indispensable to reading, but the reader must compass, not the single word-speaking, but the meaning of the

related words which express the author's thought. Knowledge of the meaning of the words used, and especially the meaning of the words as Whittier uses them, is necessary to a clear understanding of the poem. The reader who would understand the poem must know something of farm life—the sty and the corn-crib, the garden wall, the wellcurb, the sweep, and the other accessories of the farm which Whittier names or describes. Plainly, too, his knowledge must extend further—to a Chinese roof, and Pisa's leaning miracle. To such knowledge, observation of common life must minister, coupled with the study of books and pictures. In other words, the reader interprets Whittier's "Snow-Bound" by virtue of his own experience, reënforced by the experience of others as written down in books, or pictured with brush or pen. To the formal word-mastery,




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then, must be added study of the meaning of new words, or recalling such experience as explains the old. The content, as well as the form, of the word must be studied.

Added to such study, is the general training which gives us power to picture the unknown, interpreting a new scene through its relation to our old experience. The ready and trained imagination easily pictures the scene which the words conjure before the mind—makes real the homestead, snowbound and comfortfilled. Reading may be so taught as to develop this power, which takes hold on things unseen. No careful teacher omits such training.

Here, then, are different phases of teaching reading: mastery of the words as to form and sound; explanation of the meaning of new words, through observation or reading; lessons which

tend to develop power of imagination.



The young child who leaves his home and his play to enter upon the life of the school-room finds a new world awaiting him, with manifold new experiences. Hitherto he has romped and rambled to his heart's content. All his friends and playmates have in turn been his teachers, albeit theirs has been an unconscious tuition. His lessons have been in the line of his desires, or suggested by his natural environment. Longfellow pictures the little Hiawatha in the arms of his first teacher, the loving old Nokomis :

“ At the door on summer evenings  
Sat the little Hiawatha,  
Heard the whispering of the pine-trees,  
Heard the lapping of the water—  
Sounds of music, words of wonder ;—  
Saw the moon rise from the water,

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Rippling, rounding from the water,  
Saw the flecks and shadows on it,  
Whispered, 'What is that, Nokomis?'  
And the good Nokomis answered—"

. . . . .

The moon, the rainbow in the heaven, the Milky Way, the firefly, the owl and owlet, the beaver, the rabbit, the squirrel—these saluted the baby boy, and awakened his interest. "What is that?" he cried, with eager question. "And the good Nokomis answered." The little Hiawatha "learned of every bird its language." He was taught, not by old Nokomis alone, but by bird and beast, flower and field.

So with every child who enters the school-room upon that fateful first Monday in September. He brings with him, not an empty head, but a mind stored with the memories of varied experiences. Just as the little Hiawatha gazed, pon-

dered, questioned, learned—so this child has seen, has heard, has questioned, has thought, has acted. What he brings to school, who can tell? What has he seen and heard? What has he liked and desired? What has he questioned and learned? How little we know of this unwritten history! And yet it determines the net result of all our teaching. For nothing which we attempt to teach finds lodgment in the child mind unless it is linked with some past experience and awakens actual interest. Much of our reiterated instruction falls upon deaf ears, fails utterly to awaken the dormant interest, because it is ill chosen. We must know something about the life of the children before we can wisely teach them.


The thoughtful teacher remembers this truth and directs her work accordingly. Instead of rushing with headlong

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zeal into the routine of reading, writing, and number—under the impulsion of the Course of Study, and the memory of classes which failed to “pass”—she makes haste slowly, and devotes the first days of the term to lessons which help to reveal the experience of the children. Observation of and talks about common things; conversations which lead the children to tell what they can do, or like to do; story telling; picture drawing;—these afford opportunity for expression, and serve to show the teacher something of her pupils’ attainments, and the line of their interests as well. Meanwhile, they are becoming accustomed to the school-room routine, and so emerge from the period in which they gazed, dumb and dazed, at the many marvels with which this new school world is crowded. They come to know the teacher as their friend, and they become free and con-

fidant in her presence. Thus the true atmosphere of the school-room is created—the only atmosphere in which wholesome and natural teaching and learning can thrive.

This is not a prodigal misuse of time. It is the part of thrift to so spend in the beginning, for the returns are evident in the ease and readiness with which pupils and teacher afterward work together—the value of every lesson being enhanced by the mutual good will and understanding.



The school differs from the home and the kindergarten in that its allotted tasks are evidently determined by a motive and plan outside the child's comprehension. In many cases this must be so. The lessons which involve the mastery of the symbols used in reading, writing, and number, or the drill and practice

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necessary to attain skill in music or drawing or writing, have no self-evident goal for the child. So many lines, so many letters, so many problems, he attempts, because the teacher says so, and in his new universe the teacher is supreme. At home he has always chosen more or less; so, too, in the kindergarten his interest and choice determined the story or the game or the topic of conversation. He has delighted in building houses, modelling balls, weaving mats, playing games—and all, so far as he knew, for his own immediate pleasure and accomplishment. Other results, to him unknown, were of course secured. He builded better than he knew. But in every case he rejoiced in some immediate accomplishment which he desired.

In too many cases the decreed exercises of the school are meaningless and

purposeless to the beginner. Such exercises easily degenerate into dull and fruitless routine, indifferent and profitless to teacher and pupil alike. To arouse desire and awaken conscious motive is the teacher's most important work, and in teaching reading it should receive first consideration. She, therefore, after securing such freedom and coöperation as promise a fertile soil for her seed-planting, calls the children about her to explain the purpose of the lessons which will fill their days.

Perhaps she reads to them a story which they like, a new story which they have never heard. When she reaches the interesting climax she pauses to say, "I haven't time to read the rest of the story now. How I wish you could read! Then you might take the book and read the story yourselves. Would you not



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like to learn to read, so that you could read stories like these ? ”

In Hugh Miller's graphic description of his childhood experience in reading, this element of purpose and desire is strongly emphasized. “ The process of learning and acquiring had been a dark one,” he says, recalling his struggles with letters and syllables. He “ slowly mastered ” these “ in humble confidence in the awful wisdom of the schoolmistress, not knowing whither it tended,” when (as a member of the Bible Class —“ in the highest form ”) his mind “ awoke to the meaning of that most delightful of all narratives, the story of Joseph. Was there ever such a discovery made before ? ”

Such testimony might be repeated a thousand times over, by our pupils of to-day—if they were able to describe their common experience.

It was the first vision of the goal that gave meaning, motive, and conscious gladness to Hugh Miller's study. Such motive and such meaning should pervade the earliest lessons in reading, and should be consciously recognized by pupil as well as teacher. We repeat, then: the teacher's first effort, after becoming acquainted with her children, is to awaken this conscious desire to read, and to secure intelligent coöperation in her exercises.

One teacher suggests writing upon the board some sentence which has been whispered to her by the children, and then calling an older child from another room to read the secret. This is done again and again, until the children are eager to share the power which their comrade possesses, and turn gladly to the tasks required of them, that they may the sooner reach their goal.

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There is a wide difference between such teaching and the routine drill which does not enlist the child's desire. The enthusiastic bicyclist would smile if asked to exchange his morning ride to the city for an hour's exercise upon a fixed "bicycle exerciser" in the back hall. Nor could the most skilful pedagogue convince him that the exercise involved in making the wheel go round is as valuable as the spin which carries him to his destination, through the fresh morning air, along roads bordered with flowered fields. Yet the contrast is no more marked than that between the task of the syllable-pronouncer, who obediently performs his meaningless labor, and that of the child who, with conscious and earnest desire, sets himself to learn to read.

In order to give some sense of immediate achievement, the sentences of the first lessons should express

thoughts in which the children are interested.

This is Kate.

Kate can read.

Kate has a book.

Read to me, Kate.

Kate can read.

I can read, too.

Kate has a book.

I have a book, too.

See Kate's book!

See my book!

Kate has a doll.

I have a doll, too.

Kate has a kitty.

I have a dog.

Kate likes her doll.

I like my dog.

See my dog!

See Kate's little kitty!

Come, little Kitty.

Come to me, Kitty.

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The object of these preparatory lessons is to give some consciousness of the purpose of reading, and some sense of achievement. The sentences are the children's, obtained in a conversation concerning Kate, who is an older pupil, or some pictured child. The sentence is the unit, and is read by the teacher. The children repeat the sentence after her reading.

Of course these first efforts are not reading. They simply represent the children's memory of the teacher's words and tone. Often, when asked to read alone, the child dashes at the wrong sentence with his pointer, which vainly wanders in search of the right one. But just as the frequent observation of the loved story in the picture book not only fixes the words in their order, but enables the young listener to find some of them upon the page, so, by repetition of these first

sentences, the words are at last held in the mind, and are recognized in new places and under new relations. The attentive eye will recognize the new words, first in their wonted place in the sentence, then when isolated. At first the words selected for repetition and recognition are those which present fewest difficulties;—not by any means the shortest words—as **a**, **is**, **too**—but the meaningful words, the nouns and adjectives, and verbs which denote action. **Kate**, **book**, **doll**, **dog**, **kitty**—these are the first and easiest, in the lessons written above. Later, **see** and **likes**, with **can read**. Later still, **I have**, **this is**—while **is** and **a** will not be emphasized as units until the eyes have been trained to distinguish more readily, and the words have become familiar through constant repetition.

Such lessons should continue for sev-

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eral weeks, introducing the various dear and oft-seen objects of the child's environment, and the actions with which he has long been familiar. The sentences should be worth reading, and grouped in coherent paragraphs. Drill in recognizing the words should follow the sentence reading, in every day's lesson.

When the children can recognize at sight a vocabulary of one hundred to two hundred words, they should begin to compare them, and to place in groups those which are alike in sound. For example: **book**, **look**, and **brook** are known ; **red** and **fed** ; **cat**, **hat**, and **pat** ; **Fan**, **ran**, **can**, and **Dan**. Placed in lists, their similarity is evident:

book	fed	cat	Fan
look	red	hat	ran
<i>took</i>	<i>bed</i>	<i>sat</i>	<i>man</i>

Some one volunteers to increase the list, adding **took**, **bed**, **sat**, and **man**. Here is the beginning of the analysis of words into their sounds, and with this lesson a new feature appears in our word study.

Such lessons in sentence reading as have been suggested, if continued long enough and with sufficient discretion on the part of the teacher, might enable a class to read independently—for, even without the teacher's direction, obvious likenesses and differences in words are noted by the children, and rules are deduced therefrom. But the mastery of a large vocabulary is readily secured only through attention to the common laws of pronunciation, and familiarity with the sound units. Thus far every word has been presented as a new unit. Now the children should learn that these words are like many others in form, and



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that the pronunciation of one serves as a key to the many. Knowing **book**, all monosyllables ending in **ook** can at once enter their vocabulary of recognizable words; knowing **Fan**, all monosyllables with the **an** ending are known. The missing factor is the knowledge of the sounds of the separate letters which are initials in these group words—**m-an**, **F-an**, **c-an**, **r-an**, **t-an**, **p-an**. At this juncture these sounds should be taught.

There has been some question among teachers as to the time for teaching sounds of the letters. It is wise to defer this teaching until the children have acquired some little facility in reading, and understand its purpose, that their work may not be approached from the mechanical side solely. Again, the vocabulary which the children already know reveals groups of similar words and suggests the wisdom of analysis and

classification. And, further, the too early attempt to study the lists of similar words and to select and emphasize them for use in reading, drives the children at once to their most difficult task. It is much easier to recognize **Hiawatha** and **arrow**, because they are long and different, and seem hard, than to name promptly the elusive **can**, **ran**, and **tan**, which seem so easy and yet are so nearly alike as to be formidable obstacles to the success of the untrained observer. The climax of objection is reached when we cite the tendency to make sentences solely for the sake of using certain words, thus destroying the element of thought value in the sentence. "Does the fat rat see the cat on the mat?" is far more difficult for a child than is "Hiawatha lived in a wigwam with old Nokomis"—for the reasons above named.

The mastery of words is an essential

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element in learning to read. Our common mistake is, not that we do such work too well, but that we make it the final aim of the reading lesson, and lead the children to feel that they can read when they are merely able to pronounce words. Perhaps lack of careful attention to the form of words is quite as serious a mistake, for it results in carelessness in reading.

The study of form and of sound should be associated, but attention to sound alone should precede any attempt to master the form as suggesting sound. Children should be taught to recognize and to distinguish sounds, to repeat them accurately, to speak them distinctly, before they are taught to copy the single characters which represent these sounds. To hear, to repeat, to compare, to distinguish sounds, should be the order of the instruction.

Careless speech and indistinct articulation often arise from imperfect hearing, or indifferent attention to what is said. Children should be trained in the early lessons to hear, and to repeat, *exactly what is said*. The repetition is a test of the child's hearing. Begin with short sentences. Speak them clearly, in a moderate voice, requiring the children to repeat after *once* hearing. Gradually increase the length of sentence, but do not increase the volume of voice; speak distinctly, and expect the children to be attentive enough to hear an ordinary tone; teach them to respond in the same tone, with clear articulation. Continue this exercise until a long sentence can be accurately returned; then pronounce lists of words beginning with letters which demand careful articulation. When these have been mastered, draw attention to initial sounds, and then to the

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letters which represent them. Work with these until every letter suggests its sounds to the pupils, whether in a new or in a familiar word. With little children, the sound should be taught first in connection with initial letters always.

A successful device consists in allowing each pupil to represent a certain sound. If the sound is the initial sound in his own name, it will be easy for the children to remember. Thus—John can always suggest the sound of *j*, Mary the sound of *m*, Peter the sound of *p*, and so on. A class of children aided in this way will master the sounds of the letters in a very short time.

Having learned, through the initials, the sounds which various letters represent, the next step will be to analyze monosyllables into their sounds. Select first those containing short vowels, in order to avoid the difficulty of the silent

letter. The preliminary drill with the initials will have made this step an easy one to take.

Whenever a type word is represented, as **black**, for example, the children should be taught to suggest other words which rhyme with the pattern, as **crack**, **back**, **lack**, etc. If in every such case the common element is studied and mastered, in a few weeks the children will become possessors of a large vocabulary, whose basis is the few familiar words which they have studied. Every type word will stand for a list of words similar in form.

This study of sounds should continue through at least the first five school years. After analyzing any word into its separate sounds, the children should be required to name other known words which resemble the one studied. This will tend to a habit of classification, and

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will enable the pupil to depend upon himself in his study.

Diacritical marks are a help in mastering new words, if the key words have been studied in connection with the marks. They are needed also in consulting the dictionary for pronunciation. They should be taught only when necessary to the pronunciation. In older classes, after the use of the dictionary becomes necessary, a complete list should be mastered. It is a mistake to insist upon diacritical marking when the children can pronounce accurately without. I remember hearing a teacher chide a pupil for reading a sentence before she had time to mark the vowels, but, since the child could and did read without such help, the marking was evidently unnecessary. It serves as a means to an end, and should be dispensed with when the end can be reached without such artificial aid.

As a matter of fact, every child refers a new word back to a similar word with which he has become familiar. Thus: **black**, once mastered, serves as a key to **sack**, **crack**, **quack**, etc. The only elements in these words are the final element **ack** and the initial sounds. If a child hesitates with a new word, help him to refer at once to the type word which he has already mastered. Instead of pronouncing the new word for him, insist upon his using for himself his own stock of knowledge. Help him only where he cannot help himself. If he forms the habit of referring the unknown to the kindred known, he will become independent in study. For example, to a six-years-old child the word **blacksmith** may, at first sight, appear formidable. Separated into its parts and referred to the simple words already mastered, the child conquers the newcomer, and adds



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it to his list of servants. He is endowed with new strength, because he has mastered something which seemed to him hard. Such conquests, often repeated, lead to strength and independence. In many cases, it is wise to leave a child to wrestle with a word which at first sight he fails to master. Of course this process is unwise if he has no experience to which he can refer for help. Guess-work will never take the place of thought, and a child should not be driven to guess at the pronunciation, but every attempt should be based upon something which he has been taught in former lessons. Such practice will lead to thoughtful self-help.

This work may be facilitated by many devices. We have seen classes hunting for new words beginning with a given sound, as eagerly as if they were playing hide-and-seek. Or with the utmost

enjoyment they have made lists of words beginning with chosen sounds; or matched pairs of words which rhymed. But their most valuable exercise is that in which the old familiar word of their first vocabulary is made the key which unlocks the new.

Now, when a new word is presented, the teacher no longer pronounces it for the children, but asks instead, "What word helps you to pronounce it?" **Bright** is not a new word, because the children know **light**, remember the sound of **br**, and put their two bits of knowledge together to meet the new emergency. They do for themselves what the teacher has heretofore done for them.

A most helpful form of word study, which is suitable for desk work, is making lists of words containing the same sound. It strengthens the habit of

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classification, and helps in spelling and in the recognition of new words.

The most difficult work for children appears in words which are spelled alike and pronounced differently, or in words pronounced alike and spelled differently, or in the various equivalents of the same sound which our language affords. **Chair, their, where,** etc., suggest the problems of this nature. This work should be introduced not earlier than the third or fourth year. It should come in connection with the spelling lesson, and not with the reading. The mastery of these difficulties in English spelling doubtless requires many months of careful teaching.

It must not be forgotten that children are hindered and not helped by any attempt to spell, by sound, words which are unique in spelling. **Through,** for example, should be learned by sight, and

not by sound. **Beautiful, tongue, physique,** may illustrate this group. The eye and not the ear must be depended upon in the mastery of such words. Care should be taken to develop the habit of accurate attention through the eye as well as the ear. Any attempt to mark the sounds in these words increases the labor without increasing facility. If the teacher makes a careful classification of the ordinary words which frequently recur in the reading lesson, she will discover the class which must be mastered by sight. Out of the remainder she can make lists which include the ordinary type sounds. The study of these lists will reduce the labor of word mastery to its minimum, and the habit of comparison developed through this study will go far to make the children independent in the pronunciation of new words.

It is self-evident that this plan can be

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pursued only when the words are amenable to common phonic laws. **Cough**, and its congeners, should be named as new wholes. So with all words which follow no rule, and must be pronounced by substitution. No time should be lost by attempting a method which has no excuse for being, in such cases. In its place, as a help to the mastery of groups of kindred words, it is invaluable. Out of place, it is bad.

For diacritical marks and correct pronunciation, the teacher is referred to the standard dictionaries. It should not be forgotten that the teacher's pronunciation is a guide to the pupil. She needs a quick ear and the careful judgment which will render her a safe guide. The familiar rule should direct her practice : When in doubt, consult the dictionary.

Note the value of this word mastery. The pupil fast becomes independent of

the teacher, and ready to master the page for himself. Note, also, that this power becomes his in proportion to the teacher's purpose to make him self-helpful, and her skill in finding the connecting link between the new knowledge and the old.

Two elements of learning to read have been presented here: sentence reading and word mastery. Of the study of the meaning of the words and the development of the power of imagination we shall speak elsewhere.



*Reading without purpose is sauntering, not exercise. More is got from one book on which the thought settles for definite end in knowledge, than from libraries skimmed over by a wandering eye. A cottage flower gives honey to the bee, a king's garden none to the butterfly.*

—EDWARD BULWER.



## CHAPTER IV.

### THE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

IN our emphasis of certain phases of the new education, there is a tendency to swing away from the use of the text-book, so that the children depend largely upon the teacher's oral instruction and explanation. It often happens that the teacher, in her zeal, forgets that the growth of the children depends upon their own doing, and imagines that her thought and experience will suffice, without effort on the part of her pupils. This state of affairs exists in the reading class oftener than in any other. Time is often wasted in smooth-



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ing out difficulties which never existed as such to the children, and obstacles are explained away before they are recognized by the child as obstacles. Meanwhile the teacher is doing the work and the pupil is losing the opportunity to gain power by wrestling with his little problems himself.

It is essential that even the little children should be taught how to study to the limit of their ability. The study of the reading lesson may be made a most profitable exercise. Too much of the occupation termed study by both pupil and teacher is an indifferent conning of the book, a careless and hurried repetition of the text, or a thoughtless copying; all of which weakens the power of attention, and tends to make the lesson dull and uninteresting. Such loss should be prevented by careful direction of the young student. The study

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should be at first conducted under the personal guidance of the teacher, for, until the children grow into the power of learning to work by themselves, they need to be taught how to study as well as how to read. The time spent in the preparation of the lesson should be thoughtfully employed, the exercise resulting in helpful habits as well as in increased power.

Before we can teach our pupils how to study their reading lessons, we must have a realizing sense of their difficulties in reading. This means that we must know our children as well as we would have them know their lesson. A successful teacher of little children once told the writer that she allowed her pupils a period for free conversation every day. While they availed themselves of this privilege, she listened, in order to discover in what they were interested

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and about what subjects they talked freely to one another. Having learned this, she began her language lessons where the children's interest was centred, led them gradually to new interests, and helped them to overcome their limitations.

Some such study of individual children, or at least of the varying classes of children, is indispensable to the teacher who would endeavor to train her pupils to overcome the obstacles in their way. It is vain for her to assume that all classes are alike, and that a mastery of the words at the head of the lesson will properly equip them all for the feat of rendering the thought which the lesson contains. Such easy assumption ends in failure. The children differ in attainment and in experience. We cannot take for granted either knowledge or ignorance on their part. We must

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study their experience in order to know their limitations and their needs.

A class of children of foreign parentage was engaged in reading a fairy tale which described the adventures of a wee robin on his way to sing a Yule song to the king. Evidently the children were not accustomed to imaginative tales, and, moreover, they had the dimmest possible notions of the wee robin, the gray, greedy hawk, the Yule song, and the king. Their reading was dull, monotonous, and indifferent, accomplished by dint of constant suggestion and explanation on the part of the teacher, and wearisome though patient repetition on the part of the children.

The exercise, though termed reading, was in reality simply a preparation for reading. It would have been greatly improved by a conscious recognition of its import by both teacher and pupils.

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They were studying the lesson together and aloud. Had it been thoughtfully studied in this way before reading was attempted, both exercises would have been more helpful to the pupils.

This same class was afterwards questioned in regard to home reading. Not one pupil was accustomed to read or to hear reading at home. In few homes were there any books, while story-telling was a practice of which they had never dreamed. Obviously these children had in their home experience a meagre preparation for reading, and the teacher's duty was consequently a double one. In such an instance the reading lesson would be entirely robbed of its value if the proper study of the lesson were omitted.

For preliminary study, therefore, it is well for the teacher to use the period assigned to reading in talking with the

class about the lesson, her object being not to tell what she knows, but to discover what the children know or do not know. To this end she will bend a listening ear to all mistakes, not to waive them away, nor to smile at the awkward interpretation, but to see from what limitation they arise. Knowing their source, she can help to correct them by removing the cause. Such attention to the errors or the questions of the children discloses two classes of difficulties: those which the children can overcome by thought or by observation, and others in which the teacher must of necessity furnish the necessary explanation. For example, a class in a primary school read, and with fair expression, the story of "a kid upon the roof of a house that railed at a wolf passing by." The teacher, knowing her class, assumed their ignorance of the meaning of

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“ railed ”—was not surprised at the suggestion that “ the kid fired a rail at the wolf ”—and by her explanation made clear the meaning of the word. She was surprised, however, in the course of the study conversation, to discover that to the majority of the class “ kid ” stood for little boy. Nothing in the wording of the fable or in the children’s experience served to correct the impression. Again the duty devolved upon the teacher.

Obviously, in such cases the children must depend upon the teacher. To withhold aid at the right time is to make the study fruitless and the children indifferent or discouraged. On the other hand, by means of just such united exercises in study the children will learn to measure their own understanding and to point out their own limitations.

Fancy the class, described above, as

having been taught to study, and therefore having wrestled alone with the fable. Upon coming to the recitation, some are conscious of their ignorance and say at once, "I do not know what 'railed' means." They have studied to some purpose, have made themselves ready for their teacher's explanation—and for helping themselves by means of the dictionary. The other difficulty presented by the slang use of "kid" would of course fail to present itself to their consciousness.

One result, then, of the preliminary study, with or without the teacher, should be to help the children to discover the "don't know" line; the second should be to enable them to help themselves, if possible. Through careful and conscious study, they may be helped to realize the "sense" of what they read, and to judge for themselves



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when they fail to get the meaning of the sentence.

From the beginning, the children should be shown that every sentence is an embodiment of a thought, every word having its place in the expression of that thought.

“ A saucy robin is eating the ripe cherries in the tree under my window,” the children read. The teacher studies with them for a moment. What does the sentence tell them ? Who is eating the ripe cherries ? What kind of robin ? What is he doing ? What is he eating ? What cherries is he eating ? Where is the tree ? What word tells us what kind of a robin is eating ? What words tell where the cherries are ? What word tells who is eating the cherries ? Even in primary schools such questioning is valuable, leading the children to realize that the words appear in the sentence,

not by chance, but in order to express something; that every word has its work, that not one can be omitted, that a change in a single word changes the thought. Such exercises, thoughtfully conducted, will lead the children to look for the thought in the sentence, and will make its mastery a test of their success. If the sentence does not yield them a thought which they understand, let them question every word until they get its meaning. Thus they learn to recognize the line where their knowledge ends and their ignorance begins.

It is often the case, however, that the difficulty to be overcome is the pupils' inability to pronounce words whose meaning may be familiar. If this is the case, they will need to bring all their knowledge of words to bear upon this new problem. "Sidewalk" is a long word, a new word—no one knows it.

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The teacher helps, not by pronouncing it and easing the children of their load. No. She says: "That word seems long, but it is very easy. You know the first syllable." Yes, everybody knows "side." "Now, who knows the second? Who can put them together?" The children rejoice in the sense of overcoming. They have gained some power to help themselves. Our teaching should compel as well as invite such thoughtful comparison of the old with the new, should lead the children to use what they have learned, in the mastery of the not learned.

The simplest lessons in preparatory study are thus justified: they lead to a conscious judgment of one's attainment. Study means nothing if it does not lead to this judgment. The power once gained, the pupil is his own best teacher, his own strongest helper. Prize,

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then, all exercises which lead to this judgment. Instead of saying to the untrained pupil, "Read your lesson ten times," when his present attainment or lack of attainment renders such repetition worse than useless, you will say, "Read the lesson and copy all the words whose meaning you do not know." "Read and copy the words that you cannot pronounce." "Read and copy the sentence that you do not understand." "Read so carefully that you are sure you can read well to the class."

The skilful teacher will think of a hundred devices to advance such study. The test of each device will be, "Does it help to arouse thought? Does it end in thoughtful study?"

Such study is necessary before reading whenever we may assume that the lesson presents any difficulty to the child, un-

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less we prefer that the first oral rendering of the lesson shall be merely a studying aloud.

As a stimulus to, or a test of, study, it may be well to omit the oral reading occasionally, substituting for it an exercise in silent reading, whose thoroughness is tested by questions. After the usual study of the lesson the books are closed and the teacher calls upon the pupils to tell her what they have read. Older pupils may respond by giving the substance of the lesson. Younger children may be tested by more frequent and detailed questions after the reading of short paragraphs.

The above exercise is even more helpful if the children share in the questioning. They read with keener interest if their knowledge is thus put to the test.

Such exercises tend to emphasize to the pupils the truth that their reading is

not for itself, but to make them masters of the thoughts expressed in their lessons. It becomes more real, more purposeful, in proportion as this is realized.

In this connection, it may be said that anything which adds purpose to the reading lesson gives motive to study. When pupils are asked to read to the class some selection unknown to the other pupils, they study and read with a zest quite unlike that manifested in the repetition of a worn-out selection which the others already know. For some good end, recognized by himself as worthy, the child reads now. The introduction of opportunities for individual reading, as early as may be, thus proves an incentive to study and a means of rapid advancement. Cuttings from papers and magazines and collections of children's books prove most helpful at this stage, affording a prize

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for attainment, as well as an evident test of progress.

The foregoing has been written with special reference to beginners in reading. As pupils advance in their grades, the study of the reading becomes even more necessary and may be made the more profitable.

All that has been said of younger readers applies equally to older pupils. The test of the ability to study is the power to judge rightly where the limit of one's knowledge appears.

As soon as the pupil can point out the obstacle which hinders his understanding, he is ready to be taught. A single word, a question, a suggestion from the teacher, removes his difficulty. He recognizes his need and desires help,—therefore listens attentively and intelligently.

At this stage he is enabled, also, to

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help himself, since he is prepared to use the dictionary and other reference books.

Older students should read with the help of the dictionary. They should, of course, be taught how to use it, just as they are taught to interpret any other book. Its use is discussed at length in another chapter.





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*And this our life . . . . .*  
*Finds tongues in trees, books in the running*  
*brooks,*  
*Sermons in stones, and good in everything.*

—WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

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## CHAPTER V.

### LANGUAGE LESSONS AS A PREPARATION FOR READING LESSONS.

TWO problems confront the teacher of little children in the ordinary schoolroom. Children coming from different homes, with various training and environment, do not always bring a common fund of knowledge. Unaccustomed to the strange surroundings and the new *régime*, they are not always free in telling what they know. The teacher needs to learn the "contents of their minds" (as the present phrase hath it), and this she cannot readily do unless the children converse freely and without self-consciousness. Talking lessons, or lessons

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whose object is purely to help them to free expression, so that they will reveal their experiences to the teacher, are very necessary at this stage. These lessons will have a further value if they help the children to new interests, and to new knowledge. They will also be more valuable if the teacher recognizes a definite purpose and forms a definite plan for the lesson.

Again, the simplest reading lesson develops the fact that, inasmuch as the children's experiences have been varied, their corresponding fund of ideas is widely different. Any new lesson may present ideas entirely foreign to the experience of the children. The words which represent these ideas, therefore, will be unfamiliar. This state of affairs necessitates an act of teaching which should precede the act of reading. For example, a class of city children in the

West attempt to read a story which deals with life by the sea. The sounding sea, the rolling waves, the whispering foam, the rugged rocks, the shining sands, the smooth pebbles, the brown seaweed, the white-winged ships, the brave sailors, are unknown quantities to these children—entirely foreign to their experience. Clearly, before they read this lesson, they must know something of the life and scenes which the lesson portrays. The teacher of children who live by the sea is not confronted by the same problem. Her children have played upon the beach, have gathered the many-colored pebbles, have built houses in the wet sand. Ships at sea are as familiar to them as are the clouds, or the birds; while many of them have played upon the decks of their fathers' fishing-boats, and know the ropes and spars even as they know their own

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homes. These children have had an experience which fills the lesson with meaning. The inland children must be taught in the next best way. Since they cannot go to the sea, at least pictures of the sea may be brought to them. Shells and pebbles, sea-urchins, starfishes, and seaweeds will tell their story of the far-off beaches. Pictures of ships at sea, of rocks lashed by the waves in a storm, will help them to imagine the conditions which their lesson attempts to describe to them. But the wise teacher will make a connecting link, in some fashion, between the experience and interest of the child and the thought suggested by the story. Here, then, is the need of a language lesson which shall introduce or explain the reading lesson, preparing the child for the new thought, or recalling to his mind the almost forgotten experience.

The everyday experience in every city schoolroom will serve to reenforce this truth. Many a city child has never looked upon daisies and buttercups. Brooks and fields and trees are outside his little horizon. It is idle to have these children pronounce the words which stand for these objects unless the words call up pictures in their own minds, and this cannot be the case except as they have some experience with the real things. It is not impossible to bring the flowers and the birds and the trees within the experience of the children. No other work which we can ever do for them will tend more to their future happiness and growth; but, aside from that, no other work which we can do for them will contribute so generously to their growth in reading power. They cannot get the thought from the page unless the words stand for something at

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least akin to their own experience, and our first efforts must begin by occasioning the experience which is necessary to the interpretation of the printed page. As a means to good reading, then, language lessons are necessary for the purpose of developing ease of expression and freedom from self-consciousness, and leading to knowledge which will serve as a basis for the new thought contained in the lesson.

The subjects introduced in the earliest language lessons should be those with which children are ordinarily familiar. All country children are somewhat acquainted with the common animals: the rabbit, squirrel, cat, dog, cow, mouse, etc. They know something of the occupations of the people around them. They have watched the sunrise and sunset. They have seen the boughs of the trees waving in the wind. They have

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been awakened by the birds in the morning. They have cared for pet animals at home. Many city children have had something of this experience. All need to have it. In every lesson where these subjects are introduced, the teacher should be assured that the children already know something about them. A short conversation may suffice where the objects are already familiar; where they are strange, careful lessons should be arranged. The cat, rabbit, dog, squirrel, or mouse, can be brought to the schoolroom, cared for, observed, studied, discussed. These language lessons will not only give the children the knowledge necessary for understanding the lessons, but they will endow the subject with new interest, and add to the reading a sense of reality. Children who have been observing the squirrel will read with great zest the lessons which



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reaffirm what their eyes have seen, or answer the questions which they have asked, or tell some story which adds to the interest already evoked. The reading thus becomes an expression of the child's actual experience or interest. It is no longer a something which he does simply because he is told. He sees at once the fruit of his labors. He reaches a goal which seems desirable from a child's point of view. He recognizes the purpose and meaning of the story, and works to dig out the message which the sentences contain for him. Everything which serves to make the lesson real to the child's experience, makes a permanent addition to his reading power.

A little careful study convinces us that there are two general fields which all readers must explore. The subjects which appear and reappear upon the

pages of books have their source either in nature or in human experience. When we teach the child to read books, we must also teach him to apprehend that of which books treat. This teaching will necessarily include observation of nature and observation of human experience. To read "The Village Blacksmith" requires some knowledge of a blacksmith's work and its associations: the horse and his shoes, the molten iron and its action, the sounding anvil and its use, the reason for the "honest sweat" upon the brow of him who "owes not any man." Knowledge of nature and knowledge of human experience are surely needed in order to read the thought in this poem. He whose experience is richest will obtain the richest harvest from this field. Any act of reading will teach us this truth with regard to our own experience. It ought

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also to point the way for all teaching of children. A visit to a blacksmith's shop is the best possible preparation for a study of "The Village Blacksmith." If such a visit is impossible (is it ever impossible?), pictures and talks may help to supply the need. The language lesson in the one form or the other is necessary to the full interpretation of the reading. So of any poem or story which tells of the life of the farmer, the miller, the baker, the sailor, the fisherman, the shoemaker, the mother. The language lesson which serves to make the experience real to the children helps them to understand the reading lesson, and gives added power for the interpretation of all such lessons in the future.

Such language lessons should not be considered as something added to the school course. They are legitimate reading lessons, inasmuch as they pre-

pare for the study of pages which would be meaningless to many pupils without such preparation. The teacher will of course choose her own time for such lessons. Often they are given in connection with the reading lesson itself. A wiser plan ordinarily is that which allots a specific time for the observation or the conversation which is necessary to explain the reading lesson. If the first period of the morning is set aside for oral language, the subjects for this period may be easily determined by the reading lesson, and selected to accord with and prepare for it.

A few illustrative lessons appear in another chapter. They are intended to serve as suggestions merely, for those to whom such lessons are to open a new field. It is believed that in the majority of schoolrooms such teaching is already a common feature.

*And to get peace, if you want it, make for yourselves nests of pleasant thoughts. Those are nests in the sea, indeed, but safe beyond all others. Do you know what fairy palaces you may build of beautiful thought, proof against all adversity? Bright fancies, satisfied memories, noble histories, faithful sayings, treasure houses of precious and restful thoughts, which care can not disturb, nor pain make gloomy, nor poverty take away from us; houses built without hands for our souls to live in.*

—JOHN RUSKIN.



## CHAPTER VI.

### EXPRESSION IN READING.

HOW can children be taught to read aloud clearly, distinctly, and with feeling, so as to clearly convey the author's thought and to give pleasure to the listener? "My pupils do not read with expression," is a common complaint. "How can I help them?"

Manifestly the first requisite to reading with expression is the mastery of the thought on the part of the pupil, and this cannot be accomplished without mastery of the words. As has been said in another chapter, children should be trained to study in such a way that they

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can decide for themselves what words present difficulties to their understanding. When the pupils, after studying a lesson, are enabled to point to the exact words which are obstacles to their thought-getting, the teacher's labors are minimized and her teaching is at once made definite. Such study, too, leads the pupils to more thoughtful reading. Since they must weigh every word in the sentence to discover its meaning, they become accustomed to dig for the thought, and to estimate their own difficulties. By this means they help themselves to the mastery of the thought, as far as the words in which it is expressed belong to their vocabulary.

But when a pupil points out to the teacher the words which mark the boundary of his understanding, it becomes her duty to make them clear to him. This is a fruitful exercise. The child

desires to learn the meaning of the word which has blocked his way, and his need of it makes him its master forever after. It is only in this way that words are mastered. It is idle to explain a list of words for which children have no use in the expression of their thought. But after the study has revealed to the child his need of new knowledge, the word fits at once into his vocabulary and answers the new need. The teacher's explanation not only suffices to make the reading plain, but it increases the child's vocabulary for future use.

It should be borne in mind in such exercises that the word is not always made plain by simple explanation; illustration may be necessary, or some entire language lesson like those indicated in a previous chapter. The teacher should make mental note at least of these unfamiliar words, in order that she may so



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direct her language lesson as to supplement her teaching in reading. She is wise if she keeps a notebook at hand in which these lists may be recorded.

It will be seen from the above that the pupil is expected to master the words of the lesson as a means of getting the thought, before it is assumed that he can read with expression. But, having prepared himself through study, and having been assisted by the teacher's illustration and explanation, there should be no hindrance to free and natural reading. We do, however, find expression hindered by various minor causes, some of which it may be well to discuss.

A frequent occasion of indolent or indifferent reading is the child's feeling that the exercise is perfunctory, one of the tasks assigned at school as a school duty, but having in itself no excuse for

being. He needs to realize that he is delivering a message, or telling a story which some one desires to hear. It has often been observed that children read their own productions with marvellously good effect, even when they stumble and hesitate in the normal reading exercises. The reason is easily discerned. In the one case they have something to tell, and desire to tell it. In the second case, the exercise is one in which they have no special interest. The teacher's chief endeavor, then, should be directed toward inciting in the children a desire to communicate thought. This may sometimes be secured by having the class listen, with closed books, while a single pupil reads, the teacher insisting that he shall so read that every one who listens may understand and enjoy all that is read. Another help which has been suggested by many teachers is the

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practice of bringing from home different short selections, which the pupils are encouraged to read to the class. These selections may be brief and simple—some anecdote, some clipping from a newspaper, some phrase or line, some conundrum, which has interested the child. It will soon be discovered that the children will learn to read well only when conscious that their reading is the means of conveying the thought to their hearers.

The practice of consulting reference books, even with pupils in the lowest grammar grades, has a reflex influence upon the power to read aloud well, since it gives to the pupil something which he desires to read to the others and which he alone can convey to them. This desire to share what is read by becoming able to read well should be stimulated in every possible way.

Again, ease in reading, which is an important factor, is often prevented by the pupil's self-consciousness, which renders him timid and awkward whenever he attempts to read aloud in the presence of others. This timid self-consciousness varies with different individuals, of course, and it also varies in different classes. The teacher is often responsible for this shrinking on the part of the children, although it may be an unconscious responsibility on her part. Undue criticism of the reader, which draws the attention of the class to his faults and makes him conscious of himself, often prevents the very thing which the teacher is striving to obtain. The pupil's thought should be drawn away from himself and centred upon the thought in the sentence, the message which he is to deliver. The question should be directed toward that,

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rather than toward the pupil's idiosyncrasies.

This is coupled with another serious consideration. It has just been said that the child cannot read with expression if he is thinking about himself. It is also true that he cannot read well except as his mind is centred upon the subject about which he is reading. The teacher's efforts should be in the direction of picturing the scene which the child describes, so that it will become real to him, and that he may be enabled to paint it to the class. She not only will endeavor to refrain from drawing the pupil's attention to himself by ill-chosen comments, but she will also help him to imagine the thing described and to fix his thought upon it. For the time being everything else is forgotten.

Let us suppose that a class is reading "Paul Revere's Ride":

“ Meanwhile, impatient to mount and ride,  
 Booted and spurred, with a heavy stride  
 On the opposite shore walked Paul Revere.  
 Now he patted his horse's side,  
 Now gazed at the landscape far and near,  
 Then, impetuous, stamped the earth,  
 And turned and tightened his saddle-girth;  
 But mostly he watched with eager search  
 The belfry-tower of the Old North Church,  
 As it rose above the graves on the hill,  
 Lonely and spectral and sombre and still;  
 And lo! as he looks, on the belfry's height  
 A glimmer, and then a gleam of light!  
 He springs to the saddle, the bridle he  
     turns,  
 But lingers and gazes, till full on his sight  
 A second lamp in the belfry burns!  
 A hurry of hoofs in a village street,  
 A shape in the moonlight, a bulk in the  
     dark,  
 And beneath, from the pebbles, in passing,  
     a spark  
 Struck out by a steed flying fearless and  
     fleet:  
 That was all! And yet, through the gloom  
     and the light,  
 The fate of a nation was riding that night;

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And the spark struck out by that steed, in  
his flight,  
Kindled the land into flame with its heat.”\*

If the pupil is to make his hearers hear and see Paul Revere, he must see and hear him, too. His eye must be upon the belfry tower of the Old North Church; he must feel the loneliness of the quiet graveyard, the fearfulness of the silent way; he must catch the gleam of the light; must watch the impetuous mounting, hear the hurry of hoofs in the village street, and realize the fatefulness of the hour in which the land is kindled into flame. Every effort should be centred upon helping the children to feel, to imagine the picture, and to sense its depth of meaning. Say nothing now about holding the book in one hand, standing on both feet or throwing the shoulders back; but stir the class to

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feel as Paul Revere felt, and to tell the tale with enthusiastic pride. Let all the questions help to make the picture clearer and the feeling stronger. Read again, and again, and again, until the message becomes most familiar, but with every reading more eager than before.

This selection emphasizes the need of preparation for the reading lesson outside of the reading class. No one can read the poem well who does not understand the setting. The story of the Revolution is essential to understanding the poem. Why the British ships were in the harbor; why the country folk should be up and in arms; what preceded and what followed the fateful ride; the scene of the poem—the belfry, the church, the town, the river, the harbor—must be clearly in mind. The background of the poet's picture must



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be drawn before the children attempt to read aloud the paragraph.

It is obvious that the picture will be most vivid in the minds of those pupils who are most generously endowed with imagination. The above exercise goes to prove the need of some attempt on the part of teachers to cultivate the imagination of the children. A close scrutiny of the failures in our reading lessons would lead us to believe that it is to a lack of this power that we may attribute much of our difficulty in teaching reading. As soon as the children picture the scene which the words describe, they read with interest and vigor. Their indifference and heaviness are largely due to the fact that the words suggest no picture to them.

This faculty might be developed, in some degree, by frequent conversations which necessitate the children's picturing

or imagining what they have read. The simplest primer will lend itself to this exercise. The habit of drawing the picture which the sentence suggests is a further stimulus. Reading fairy stories or stories of adventure may help to stimulate the imagination. An effective aid is derived from playing or acting the story told in the lesson. I remember seeing a primary class that played "Hiawatha" with great delight, different children taking the parts of Nokomis, Hiawatha, Wenonah, the Pine Tree, the Fir Tree, the Squirrels, the Rabbits; reciting their parts with eager pleasure, acting them in the most unconscious fashion, and never with any lack of expression. The children recited with ease and naturalness and vigor. They were lost in their play, which was very real to them. Not long ago I visited a school in which the children had begged the privilege of rep

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resenting the dialogue which they were reading. They assigned the parts themselves, improvised simple costumes, and read their various parts with great animation. The members of the class who served as audience listened with rapt attention, very unlike that which is ordinarily accorded to a rendering of the reading lesson. Through the play, the lesson became vitalized, it was made real. It did not occur to the teacher to suggest inflections or pauses; such suggestions were quite as unnecessary as they would have been in any conversation with the children. These things take care of themselves when the children have once been overmastered by the desire to express the thought. Nor will it ever be necessary to dwell upon them if this desire is created. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall

be added unto you.” In a parallel sense, if we once inspire in the children the desire to convey the message of the text, the accessories of inflection and tone will become theirs. It cannot be too strongly emphasized that these lesser phases of good reading will be secured if properly subordinated to one great aim—the desire to communicate thought.

It is not difficult to imagine a question at this point. “Would you not have any vocal exercises to help in securing expression?” By all means, but not as a part of the reading exercise. If the exercise shows that the children have certain needs,—if the teeth are closed, if the pronunciation is slovenly or the articulation poor,—special exercises should be planned to remedy such defects, but these should be given as exercises and not as a part of the reading lesson. Sentences which demand clear articulation

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may be pronounced in rapid succession, or sung to the scale; selections may be read from the farthest corner of the room. Exercises which stretch the muscles used in articulation, exercises which straighten the body or secure ease in posture; breathing exercises and their kindred,—all are helpful, *as exercises*, but they should not interrupt the reading. They may alternate with reading, and prepare for it, but they should be considered, as they really are, subordinate to the one essential, the creation of a desire to read.

“Would you ever read to children in order to help them to get the right expression?” is a question which is frequently asked. By all means. There is no other way in which children can form an ideal of good reading. Many children hear no reading in their homes. They are accustomed to monotonous

speech and to careless articulation. It is necessary to read to them, and to read well, in order to show them what good reading is. A further advantage of reading to the children is to show them how much the teacher gets from a poem or story which has meant little to them. Such reading should not lead to servile imitation on the part of the children; rather the opposite. The teacher's comments upon the reading in the class will readily fix the seal of her approval upon individual renderings. "Let me hear how that seems to you, John," she will say. "Mary, let me hear you read. I should like to get your thought." "Kate, is that the way you understood it? Let me hear you read it." I have heard a teacher request one pupil after another to read, waiting until the interpretation which was like her own was given before she commended, and im-

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pressing upon the entire class her feeling that such reading alone was correct. As a matter of fact, every rendering which was given was as good as the teacher's—some even were better. The reader must interpret the author's message as it appears to him. His reading shows *his* interpretation. If the teacher reads to the class, she shows simply what the writer's message has been to her. In the reading lesson she gives to the pupils the opportunity of expressing what they themselves have read.

In reading, as in everything else, ease comes with practice. The class should have two varieties of practice. They should read and re-read a few selections which demand variety in expression; and they should read many easy selections which require very little effort in mastering. If the exercise is difficult enough to demand study, it will neces-

sitate hesitation if read at sight. Such attempts at sight reading, with too difficult matter, will result in the habit of stumbling. Children should have an opportunity to overcome by study the difficulties which would otherwise make them hesitate in reading. All sight reading, so called, should be easy enough to be read fluently at sight.

The old-fashioned custom of setting apart Friday afternoons for reading, recitation, and declamation should be revived. The exercise was admirable, giving the children confidence in reading and speaking which resulted in ease and fluency. It was a helpful adjunct to the reading class and deserves to be honored in the observance.

It may be well to suggest, in this connection, that the habit of reading with free and individual expression is seriously hindered by the practice of concert



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reading. If the teachers who pursue that practice were to attempt occasionally to read aloud in company with others, they would discover the difficulties under which the children labor. The practice works in direct opposition to the exercises which have been advised. It is impossible for the child to give his individual rendering in a concert recitation. He cannot even read at his individual rate; he must wait for his neighbor. His words drag, his voice becomes strained and unnatural, the exercise assumes the schoolroom tone, and the children adopt the swinging rhythm of the singsong. A few children lead; the others follow, or most of the others—a very few succeed in evading the reading altogether. All this is wrong. It is better for the child to read once alone than to read ten times in concert with others. It is true, however, that there is one

place for the concert reading. When a poem or paragraph has been memorized by the entire class under the direction of the teacher, they may learn to recite it well in concert without the disadvantages described; but, as a reading lesson, the exercise has no place—it should be banished from the school-room.

One word more. In our attempts to teach children to read with expression, we may be helped by studying to learn what selections they like best to read, what it is that appeals to them. By following the line of their interest we may come to realize why selections which we have chosen are difficult for them, and through making a wiser choice may become more successful in our teaching. Here, as elsewhere, it is the intelligent study of the class by the teacher which enables her to apply her knowledge of the subject which she teaches.

*The highest office of reading is not to open the eyes of the child to the evolution of the material world, nor to teach him to adapt its resources to his own subsistence ; he needs no books for that. The greatest hunger of the human soul is not for food. It is that he may better understand soul motives and heart needs ; that he may more freely give to the heart-hungry, and more freely receive from the soul-full ; that he may live out of and away from his meaner self ; that he may grow all-sided ; that he may look with analytic rather than with critical eyes upon the erring ; that he may relish the homely side of life, and weave beauty into its poverty and ugly hardships ; that he may add to his own strength and wisdom the strength and wisdom of the past ages. It is that he may find his own relation to the eternal, that the child, equally with the grown person, turns to the songs which ravish the ear and gladden the heart.*

—MARY E. BURT.



## CHAPTER VII.

### LESSONS TO SUGGEST PLANS OF WORK.

#### I.—*Lesson upon the Cow.*

To precede or accompany Reading Lessons which refer to the Cow (in lowest grades).

1. *Find out what the children know about the cow.*

EVERY new lesson should be built upon and fastened to the children's past experience. If they have no knowledge of cows, we must introduce the subject accordingly. If they have always known them, the lesson will be merely a review, because the foundation will have been prepared. If the children live in the country and know

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the common animals, proceed at once to definite questions which will arrange their knowledge and help them to express it :

Where have you seen cows ? What do you know about them—their size, color; the head, ears, legs, feet, tail ?

How large are they, as compared with the horse, dog, cat ?

Compare the covering with that of the horse, dog, cat. Compare the parts with the corresponding parts of those animals.

Describe the horns. Why do cows have horns ? What use do they make of them ?

Describe the ears. Where are they ? Does the cow move them ? The ears of the dog, cat, cow, horse are movable; ours are not. Why ?

Compare the cow's nose and mouth with those of the cat or the horse.

Does anyone know anything about the cow's teeth? What does she eat? What kind of teeth does she need?

Tell the children about the chewing of the cud.

Of what use to the cow is the long tail with its brush at the end? Who has seen her use it? Would a short tail serve as well?

Who knows anything about the cow's foot? Who can draw a picture of a cow's footprint?

Of what use are cows to us? What does the cow give to us?

How should cows be cared for? What kind of stall, what kind of bed, what food, water, pasture, should they have? Describe a pasture that you would like if you were a cow. Describe a barn that you would like if you were a cow.

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How ought we to treat animals? Is it right to forget their wants when we have the care of them?

Every lesson upon animals should help the children to realize more fully their obligation to properly care for them. Sympathy for animal life ought to be developed through the reading and language lessons. Interest in animal life is always present in children. The questions above suggested cannot be answered at once, by any ordinary class of children. Many who are familiar with cows in general will be unable to answer them definitely. But the questions will lead them to more thoughtful observation, after which they can report in another lesson. Sometimes the subjects may be distributed, different groups of children being held responsible for the answer to a certain question.

2. *Direct outside observation, in order to get new knowledge.*

It is entirely feasible, in many school-rooms, to make the study of the cow the subject of a field lesson. The children may be taken, in groups, to a farmyard, a pasture, or a stable, where a cow may be observed and studied. Such lessons have ceased to be formidable, since they have become so common. The need of these visits is revealed by the children's vague answers. Nothing but definite observation of the real thing will open their eyes, and make the words in their lesson full of meaning.

There are many city children who have never seen a cow. If it is impossible to take them to a real cow, excellent pictures should be substituted. Many of the questions suggested could be answered by pictures. It must be remembered, however, that the picture tells to



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us, who have had the real experience, much more than it tells to a child who has never had that experience. It is not strange that a boy who has never seen a real cow should imagine that animal to be six inches long, the size of the cow which he has known from pictures in the lesson. Emphasize the fact of the size. Allude to the picture as a picture only. Have the children show by their hands how high a cow would be, how long, how wide its head, etc. By such means, help to vivify the mental picture which is suggested to the children by the lesson. If the pictures are the only avenue through which they learn about the cow, do not attempt to give as much information as would naturally be associated with the real observation lesson. Remember that the amount of knowledge which the child gains is not proportioned to the number of facts which

the teacher enumerates. He will intelligently appropriate those which his observation and thought have helped him to understand. As has been said before, this truth determines the value of the reading lesson to the child, and necessitates the associated lessons, which supplement his experience and enable him to bring to the lesson a mind furnished with appropriate ideas.

3. *Tell the children simple facts which they cannot find out for themselves.*

There are many facts associated with the cow which the children can know only through others: the use of the horns, of the bones, the hair, etc.; the manufactures; the reason for the cud-chewing; the making of butter and cheese. The writer has known classrooms in which milk was skimmed, the cream churned into butter, and the but-

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ter eaten by the children. The quantity, of course, was small, but the process was very real and very interesting. This happened recently in a kindergarten in a large city. There were only three children in the class who had ever seen a cow. It is hardly necessary to say that the lesson followed a visit to the cow.

### *4. Reinforce the lessons by stories.*

Stories about cows, or descriptions of certain animals, perhaps the pets which we have known, will add interest to the lessons.

### *5. Collect pictures of cows, for comparison and description.*

In almost any district the children will be able to help in making collections of pictures which illustrate the language and reading lesson. These pictures can be obtained from newspapers, maga-

zines, advertisements, and various other sources. Every child who helps to swell the collection will feel an added interest in it. The collection will be valuable in proportion as it is carefully arranged and thoughtfully used by the teacher. If the cards are neatly mounted upon separate sheets which contain the name of the contributor, and distributed amongst the children for observation and comparison, it will prove really helpful. Through the comparison of the different pictures many facts will be developed, suggested by the children's comments or questions. Such teaching will be sure to fit the need of the children.

These suggestions will be modified and arranged by any teacher who desires to use them. They may help to point the way for those who are not entirely familiar with this phase of their work, and so lead to better things.

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### II.—*Lesson upon the Oak.*

As in the previous lesson, the teacher's first object should be to discover what the children already know. Nearly all children, even those living in the midst of the city, have some opportunity to see and study trees, and their attention should be carefully directed to the trees in their neighborhood.

Have you ever seen an oak tree? Where was it growing? How tall was it? (Compare with a man, with a horse, a house, with other trees.)

What do you remember about the size of its trunk? about the bark, about the leaves, about the fruit?

Bring to the class acorns, leaves, or, in blossom time, bring blossoms. What is the use of the blossom, of the leaf, of the acorn? Draw them.

Plant an acorn and see what comes of it.

Of what use is the oak tree to us? (Do not forget that beauty as well as manufacturing is to be considered.)

Name articles made of oak.

Bring specimens of the wood.

The older pupils can draw the tree.

Tell the children about the Charter Oak.

Take them, if possible, to a field or woods or park or street where they can see an oak tree growing.

Refer to the lesson some weeks afterwards, in order to lead to continued observation of the tree in different stages.

.Do not feel that it is necessary to do all which the lesson suggests, with every class; but be sure that the children have some actual knowledge of a real oak tree.

III.—*Lessons upon Occupations.*

Frequent reference is made, in all literature, to the occupations of men. Even if this were not so, a knowledge of these occupations is necessary to even a fair education. Every child should be intelligent in regard to the work of the farmer, the miller, the carpenter, the brick-layer, the engineer, the miner, the merchant. But, be this as it may, the pages of the school reader, even, will demand some knowledge of the everyday occupations of men.

Children are naturally interested in the occupations of their neighbors. They like to see things made. They like to know why certain effects come from certain causes. Nothing could be more fruitful than a visit to a blacksmith shop, a new house that is being built, a sewer that is being dug, a cellar that is being

laid; to a ropewalk, to a mine, to a quarry, where real men are engaged in real work. This natural interest of children in these subjects is evidenced by their desire to "play" the miller, the farmer, the driver, the boatman, etc. We do well when we build upon this natural interest. "The Village Blacksmith" is a familiar poem, based upon a common experience. As has been said, the children who know something about the work of the blacksmith will enjoy and understand the poem as no others can. Ask them to go to a blacksmith, and then to report; or go with a class of children, and help them to observe and to question. The blacksmith will be helpful and generous if he is courteously requested to give his aid to the children. Prepare them for the lesson by a preliminary talk about the blacksmith, his work, the need of his work;



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his tools, the material with which he works; the source from which iron is obtained, the process by which steel is made. Having prepared the children to observe, assign questions or topics upon which they are to report: the anvil, the forge, the sledge, the bellows, the horse-shoe, etc. Upon returning from the visit, allow the different pupils to tell what they have seen. After the general conversation, insist upon an orderly description.

Kindred lessons may be given upon the other occupations suggested. In many cases, stories can be told, or read, which will reënforce the observation. It must not be forgotten that one result of the lessons should be a sincere respect for honest toil, and sturdy pride in ability to do honest work well. It is hardly necessary to say that the visit to the blacksmith's shop will reënforce the

reading, and that a study of Longfellow's poem will in turn make the visit more valuable. The language lesson will help the reading lesson because it adds interest; it will also help the lesson as literature, because it gives fuller power of interpretation, and corresponding appreciation of the poem. All these lessons will be made more valuable by the use of collections of pictures.

#### IV.—*Rain.*

For Second Grade.

##### *Observation during a Rainfall.*

What is rain ?

Where does it come from ?

How did it get there ?

Experiment later, if the children become interested in the question, but do not answer it for them now; let them question and think.

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Upon which windows does it fall ?

Why not upon the opposite windows ?

Where does it go ?

What good will it do ?

What harm will it do ?

Think what the rain does for the trees.

How do you know ?

What does it do for the birds ?

How do you know ?

What does it do for the flowers ?

How do you know ?

What does it do for you ?

If no rain were to fall for three or four months, what would happen to the flowers ?

To the grass ?

To the gardens ?

To the brooks ?

Would it make any difference to you ?

Experiment: Breathe upon the cold glass; show condensed vapor.

Boil water; collect vapor on cold surface.

Recall vapor on windows.

Recall clothes drying.

Recall windows on washing day.

Explain how fine particles of water are carried through the air, and unite so as to be seen, when cold, in the breath, on windows, in clouds, in fog.

Explain how rainfall is caused.

Read "Children of the Clouds."

Memorize "Is it Raining, Little Flower?"

Read to the children "A Rainy Day."

Tell the story of the drop of water in its journey from ocean to ocean again.



*Oh for a booke and a shadie nooke,  
Eyther in-a-doore or out ;  
With the grene leaves whispering overhede,  
Or the streete cry all about.  
Where I maie reade all at my ease,  
Both of the newe and olde ;  
For a jollie goode booke whereon to looke,  
Is better to me than golde.*

—OLD ENGLISH SONG.



## CHAPTER VIII.

### LESSONS TO SUGGEST PLANS OF WORK —CONTINUED.

#### *I.—Lessons on Bird Life.*

THE study of birds has become so common as a part of school work, that suggestions upon the subject may be trite and superfluous. For the teachers who have not yet attempted such study, the following practical suggestions may be helpful.

All children are interested in animal life, but few city children have more than a vague notion of the habits and characteristics of the animals of which

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they read. Not long ago, the writer chanced to hear a class of primary children reading about the hen. The exercise was hesitating, the reading dubious. Upon questioning it transpired that but three children in the class had ever seen a live hen, and in two of these cases the hen was "nailed up in a box in the market." One child only had seen a hen walking about, and that was in "Tim Jones's Alley." Obviously the sentences which had seemed so luminous to the teacher were dark to the children.

Such experiences are not confined to city children. Wide experience has discovered many a country child whose eyes have never been truly opened to the life about him. It is safe to assume that any class of little children will profit by the lesson which increases their interest in the bird world, and opens their

eyes to see new beauties, their minds to receive new pictures, and which incidentally explains the pages that otherwise are meaningless.

For such preliminary study, the best beginning is the observation of some caged bird which can be kept within reach for awhile. A canary, a parrot, a dove, a hen, a duck will behave well in the schoolroom, may be cared for by the pupils, and observed for several days, and will serve as a centre from which new investigation may radiate, or a type to which all new bird knowledge may be referred. The canary or parrot will be brought in its own house. For the others a dwelling-place may be extemporized. A box frame may be built, open on all sides, and covered with coarse wire netting or netted fencing; or one side may be removed from a wooden box of suitable size, and net-



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ting be substituted for it. The children should be able to watch the bird as it eats, drinks, walks, or flies about, and should at first be allowed to observe without the restriction of question or recitation.

The conversation of the pupils, their exclamations and questions, will reveal the best line of approach to the subject. It will be found that their chief interest centres in the actions of the bird. "See him eat! How fast he turns the seed. See the shells fly! How he spatters the water! Oh, he's washing himself!" Such are the free comments of the children. Let these determine the first lesson.

"You have been watching the canary. What have you seen him do? What can he do that you can do? What can he do that you *cannot* do?"

These questions cannot be answered

without actual knowledge. If the replies are written upon the board, it will be discovered that the children have added definitely to their store of knowledge, and likewise to their vocabulary.

Another conversation may compare the cat and the canary, the cow and the canary, or (a very different exercise) may note the resemblances and differences between the canary and other birds with which the children are somewhat familiar. This comparison leads to observation of the structure, to naming and describing the parts of the canary.

“The canary can fly because he has wings. We have no wings, but we have arms. The cat has no wings, but she has two forelegs.” So the comparison proceeds to head, eyes, bill, feet, until the children are able to describe the bird in clear and appropriate language.

Another talk compares the habits of

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the bird with those of the cat or dog, and leads to descriptions of the nests, the eggs, the home habits of the bird, with the rearing of the young. The lessons prepare for the reading, to be sure, but this value is incidental only, as compared with the widened interest and growing power of the children in thinking, seeing, and saying.

It would be interesting to keep a record of the words used, or needed, by the children in such lessons, to collate them afterward, and to discover what proportion of the list of words is included in the ordinary stock vocabulary of elementary readers. Such a study would reveal to any intelligent teacher the close relation between experience and reading, and would fully justify the plan of work outlined in these pages.

It may be well to add in passing that

such a series of lessons serves as a basis to which all the related lessons may be referred. When the children read about the oriole or the robin, he is compared with the canary, and the old lesson explains and reenforces the new. The value of such lessons depends upon the teacher's recognition of this relation. The children need not know the skeleton of her plan, but she must know the end from the beginning.

II.—*Study of "The Builders."*—Long fellow.

PREPARATION FOR THE POEM.

If the readers are young children, it would be well to prepare for the reading of the poem by a lesson upon the material building. It is possible that the carpenters and masons are already at work in the immediate neighborhood of the

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schoolhouse. The children have been interested in watching the digging of the cellar, the laying of the foundation stone, the fixing of the frame in position, the building of the walls. A little questioning and observation will lead them to see how necessary it is to the strength of the building that every part be well shaped and firmly placed. There may be unfortunate examples in their neighborhood which show the folly of dishonest building. They may easily be led to realize what harm may result from slighting any piece of work, or falsely covering any weakness. Anecdotes are abundant to illustrate this: the bridge which gives way beneath the weight of the passing train, carrying hundreds to death; the dam which has weak timber, yielding to the pressure of the freshet; the elevator which falls with its precious load. These point to building which

was insecure and treacherous. For the other side of the picture, we turn to the old cathedrals, showing the children the beautiful spires, the exquisite carving, and telling them how they have endured through the ages because their builders did honest work.

Such a lesson prepares for the interpretation of the poem, which turns our thought to the building which we are shaping with our to-days and yester-days. The lesson of the unstable wall, the falling bridge, as well as the grace and strength of the cathedral, serve now as a parallel for the poet's teaching, and the inevitable result to others is seen as well as felt when we read of the "broken stairways, where the feet stumble as they seek to climb." After such lessons, every line is filled with meaning as the children read and re-read the inspiring poem. Then it is time to memorize

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every line, but especially the two stanzas,

“ In the elder days of art,  
Builders wrought with greatest care  
Each minute and unseen part ;  
For the gods see everywhere.

“ Let us do our work as well,  
Both the unseen and the seen :  
Make the house, where gods may dwell,  
Beautiful, entire, and clean.”

It is not necessary to preach while teaching this poem. The lesson impresses itself upon the children if they are rightly prepared for it. They will make their own application, but we should not forget that a valuable lesson like this is not measured by ease in recitation or accuracy in reading. If in the days to come the memory of the poet's words gives strength in the hour of temptation, or incites to honest work when the hand inclines to careless shirk-

ing, the lesson will have counted for good. In selecting our poems for our children, and in directing their reading, such hope should guide our choice. The words of the poem or story will recur again and again when the memory of the schoolroom has faded. We should be assured that the minds of our pupils are furnished with thoughts worth remembering. "Whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

### III.—*Study of the Reading Lesson.*

#### ILLUSTRATIVE LESSON.

#### LITTLE BELL.

Piped the blackbird on the beechwood spray,  
"Pretty maid, slow wandering this way,  
What's your name?" quoth he,—



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“ What’s your name ? Oh, stop, and straight  
unfold,  
Pretty maid, with showery curls of gold ! ”  
“ Little Bell,” said she.

Little Bell sat down beneath the rocks,  
Tossed aside her gleaming golden locks.  
“ Bonny bird,” quoth she,  
“ Sing me your best song, before I go.”  
“ Here’s the very finest song I know,  
Little Bell,” said he.

And the blackbird piped ; you never heard  
Half so gay a song from any bird,—  
Full of quips and wiles,  
Now so round and rich, now soft and slow,  
All for love of that sweet face below,  
Dimpled o’er with smiles.

And the while the bonny bird did pour  
His full heart out freely, o’er and o’er,  
’Neath the morning skies,  
In the little childish heart below  
All the sweetness seemed to grow and grow,  
And shine forth in happy overflow  
From the blue, bright eyes.

Down the dell she tripped, and through the  
glade  
Peeped the squirrel from the hazel shade,  
And from out the tree  
Swung, and leaped, and frolicked, void of  
fear,  
While bold blackbird piped, that all might  
hear,  
“ Little Bell ! ” piped he.

Little Bell sat down amid the fern ;  
“ Squirrel, squirrel, to your task return ;  
Bring me nuts, ” quoth she.  
Up, away, the frisky squirrel hies,—  
Golden woodlights glancing in his eyes,—  
And adown the tree  
Great ripe nuts, kissed brown by July sun,  
In the little lap dropped one by one.  
Hark ! how blackbird pipes to see the fun !  
“ Happy Bell ! ” pipes he.

Little Bell looked up and down the glade ;  
“ Squirrel, squirrel, if you’re not afraid,  
Come and share with me ! ”

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Down came squirrel, eager for his fare,—  
Down came bonny blackbird, I declare !  
Little Bell gave each his honest share ;  
    Ah, the merry three !

And the while these frolic playmates twain  
Piped and frisked from bough to bough again,  
    'Neath the morning skies,  
In the little childish heart below  
All the sweetness seemed to grow and grow,  
And shine out in happy overflow  
    From her blue, bright eyes.

By her snow-white cot, at close of day,  
Knelt sweet Bell, with folded palms, to pray.  
    Very calm and clear  
Rose the praying voice, to where, unseen,  
In blue heaven, an angel shape serene  
    Paused awhile to hear.

“ What good child is this ? ” the angel said,  
“ That, with happy heart, beside her bed  
    Prays so lovingly ? ”  
Low and soft,—O ! very low and soft,  
Crooned the blackbird in the orchard croft,  
    “ Bell, dear Bell ! ” crooned he.

“ Whom God’s creatures love,” the angel fair  
Murmured, “ God doth bless with angels’  
care ;

Child, thy bed shall be  
Folded safe from harm. Love, deep and  
kind,

Shall watch around, and leave good gifts be-  
hind,

Little Bell, for thee.”

—THOMAS WESTWOOD.

The poem selected for this lesson is suitable for use in third, fourth, or fifth grades, although even younger children enjoy hearing it read. Such children would, however, find difficulty in a detailed study, such as is suggested in this exercise. The poem may be used simply as a reading lesson, or it may be read, studied, and memorized by the pupils as a language exercise. The various advantages of the study are indicated in the following suggestions, which are intended to indicate merely some of

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the different modes of treatment which may be attempted in language teaching.

### THE THOUGHT IN THE POEM.

As in all lessons, the children should read the entire poem, or hear it read, before any detailed study is attempted. This is done in order that the poem may be presented to them as a whole, giving its thought or telling its message. After such reading, every verse and word will assume its rightful place in the description of the story. Otherwise, given separately, the words lose the meaning which they are intended to convey. A poem, like a picture, should be presented as a whole, and never dissected, in the first lesson.

It is wise, sometimes, to read and to re-read without note or comment; then to lay aside the book and leave the chil-

dren to recall the story, and to accustom themselves to its pictures. At the next lesson, the teacher may question, following out any of the suggested lines of work.

The important motive is to get the message which the author intended to give us in the poem. Everything else must be subordinate to this purpose. Any supplementary teaching which draws the attention away from the poem, creating a separate centre of interest, is excessive. All illustration and explanation should be intended simply to throw light upon the poem, making the pictures more vivid and the message more plain.

The thought in this poem is very evident, even to the children. In the first stanza the blackbird on the beechwood spray introduces us to the pretty maid, "slow wandering" his way. She is little

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Bell. Sitting down beneath the rocks,  
she asks the blackbird for his best song.  
The bonny bird pours his full heart out  
freely, while, in the little childish heart  
below, all the sweetness seems to grow  
and grow, and shine forth in happy over-  
flow from the blue, bright eyes. The  
squirrel swings and leaps and frolics in  
the glade, and at the child's bidding  
drops down great ripe nuts into her lap.  
The blackbird pipes to see the fun. The  
child shares her treasures with the squir-  
rel and the bird, and again the poet tells  
us

“ In the little childish heart below  
All the sweetness seemed to grow and grow,  
And shine out in happy overflow  
From her blue, bright eyes.”

When, at close of day, the child kneels  
to pray beside her snow-white cot, an  
angel pauses to hear, and asks what good  
child prays so lovingly beside her bed.

The blackbird answers from the orchard croft, "Bell, dear Bell!" "Whom God's creatures love, God doth bless with angels' care," the angel murmured. "Child, thy bed shall be folded safe from harm. Love, deep and kind, shall watch around, and leave good gifts behind, little Bell, for thee."

Even the little children sense the meaning of the poem. They have already learned that love wins love and makes friends, and they feel it to be both natural and just that the loving little Bell shall be shielded from all harm, and sheltered by loving thought. The elder children may be reminded of Sidney Lanier's poem, "How Love Sought for Hell," failing to find it because wherever his presence came there were kindness and light. The little ones are reminded that the mirror gives back smile for smile, and frown for frown. It is



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hardly necessary to "point the moral and adorn the tale." The poet has repeated in the self-same words the lines which show how the child grew in sweetness as she played so lovingly with her woodland friends. For many classes it would be enough to talk of the poem until the children were possessed of this thought, or rather this feeling, and then leave it to do its own work. In this case, however, the poem serves as a text for the lesson, and we shall consider other phases.

### *The Pictures in the Poem.*

The poem takes us at once to the woods where the blackbird pipes on the beechwood spray. We see the rocks, the dell, the glade, the trees, the hazel shade, and are made acquainted with the blackbird and the squirrel. Plainly, the setting of the poem is clearest to

those children who themselves have played in the woods; who have heard the blackbird sing, and have seen the squirrel leap from bough to bough. The beechwood spray, the hazel shade, the dell, the glade, the fern, are already familiar to such children, and need no lesson to introduce them. But if the tenement house, the narrow alley, the brick walls, and the noisy street have been the familiar surroundings of the children, and if the country seems as far away to them as Paradise, the poem is written in a foreign tongue. With such children, other lessons are necessary before any such selection is read or memorized. These lessons may not be given at the time of the reading—far better not; but they should precede the reading in the teacher's plan, and the young reader should enter upon this lesson equipped with some knowledge of the

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bird, the squirrel, and the woods. In another chapter, something has been said of the necessity of such teaching, and of the way in which such lessons may be conducted. The suggestion is made here simply to emphasize this truth: that observation of nature is essential to the interpretation of literature.

### *Study of the Vocabulary of the Poem.*

Although the pupils may be prepared by their out-of-door experience to understand the poem, they will, nevertheless, be met by a new difficulty in the reading. The language of literature differs from that to which they have been accustomed in conversation. The tendency of our school readers and children's books is often to remove such difficulties from the path of the children. The lessons are expressed in words al-

ready familiar to the children, and in colloquial forms. While this practice renders the first lessons in reading easy, it makes the entrance to literature difficult. Many expressions are entirely foreign to the child's ear, and therefore unintelligible, even when the story is attractive. The poem which we are using for illustration contains many words and phrases which the children have not met in their ordinary reading. These must be explained and their meaning made familiar to the children. " ' What's your name ? ' *quoth* he " ; " stop, and *straight unfold* " ; " *showery* curls of gold " ; " *gleaming* golden locks " ; " *bonny* bird " ; " blackbird *piped* " ; " *dell* " ; " *glade* " ; " *hazel* shade " ; " void of fear " ; " *hies* " ; " *golden woodlights* " ; " *adown* the tree " ; " *playmates twain* " ; " *an angel shape* " ; " *crooned* the blackbird in the *orchard croft*," are some of these.

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It may not be necessary nor wise in most classes to study all these expressions minutely, but they should become plain to the children so that they may plainly speak the message of the poem, and present no difficulty if met elsewhere. So with the figurative expressions: "The bird did pour his full heart out freely"; "the sweetness did shine forth in happy overflow"; "thy bed shall be folded safe from harm"; "stop, and straight unfold."

There is no reason why the young readers should not come to realize the picture in these figurative expressions, to compare their several words with the figure which the poet has used, and to begin to sense the difference between the plain, straightforward speech and the pictured verses of the poet. Such study, however simple, will help the children to some appreciation of the

beauty of expression, which is one charm of literature.

From what has been said, it will be rightly judged that the poem affords a basis of several lessons, all of value in different directions. It may not be wise to make a detailed and careful study of every poem which is read or memorized by the children, but some teaching in the lines suggested is indispensable to intelligent reading on the part of the children. The phrases which are so familiar to us often suggest a very curious idea to the children. This interpretation is shown when they draw pictures to represent the scenes of the poem. In a certain school, the teacher read a story to the children containing the expression, "his mother gave him leave to go." The child drew the mother in the act of presenting a leaf to the boy. "Fret-work," said the boy who

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read "Sir Launfal" for the first time, "fret-work is work that makes you fret"; while the child who drew the picture of the hare and the tortoise represented a turtle and a boy with bushy hair. Reference has been made elsewhere to the kid on the roof of the house which was pictured as a little boy; and the writer remembers the pictures which were drawn by children in illustration of the above poem, representing the angels with webbed feet. These items are intended simply to suggest that the child's crude notion is often very different from the meaning which the word or phrase conveys to us. We should be grateful for the frank question or the crude remark which betrays the child's mistake, and should be careful to secure such confidence and freedom in our classes as will enable us to discover what the children are really thinking.

After reading and discussing the poem, the children may memorize it. At this juncture it is wise for the teacher to read it to the children again and again in order that they may get some notion of the proper reading. The children's recitation will incline to adopt the virtues of the teacher's reading; the faults will be imitated, also.

If, after such study and such memorizing, the words of the poem appear now and then in the children's conversation or writing, let us rejoice; for this means not simply that new words have been added to the vocabulary, but that the child has a new conception of beauty of thought and speech.





*We're made so that we love  
First when we see them painted, things we  
have passed  
Perhaps a hundred times nor cared to see;  
God uses us to help each other so,  
Lending our minds out.*

*— ROBERT BROWNING.*



## CHAPTER IX.

### THE STUDY OF PICTURES.

**C**HILDREN delight in pictures. Every child-lover knows how intently and with what delight the baby's eyes gaze upon the pages of the beloved picture book, long before the words which describe the picture can be spoken or even understood by the young student. The childish chatter is an attempt to express the delight in the treasure and the thoughts suggested by the picture.

As the child grows older, pictures continue to be a source of pleasure. He names the familiar objects, talks about

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them, asks questions about them. Thus he unconsciously grows in the power to see and to tell what he sees, taught by the many willing helpers who turn the pages of his book and interpret its pictures.

Many a new idea creeps into the child's mind by the path of the picture book. Many an object which would be entirely foreign to his experience otherwise, becomes familiar through its pages. Every new book put into his hands is first challenged by him to discover whether it contains pictures, and it is the pictures that first excite his desire to learn to read the story which they illustrate.

We cannot estimate the contribution which such books make to both knowledge and vocabulary. Most of us can think of scenes which we know only through their pictured semblances, yet seem to know well. We can remember our first glimpses of scenes that pic-

tures had made familiar. How friendly, how well known they seemed! How we were *used* to them! Niagara, Westminster Abbey, the Pyramids, the Alps, are known to many of us only through pictures. Are we entirely ignorant, then, of their beauty or their grandeur? When our eyes first look upon them, shall we not greet them as already a part of our possession?

We have been slow, in our school work, to follow the teaching of children's experience. Although we have always known and always recognized the child's interest in pictures, we have not used them in the schoolroom to the extent that they might have been used, nor in such a manner as to yield the greatest advantage.

The writer remembers a class of children in whose hands were placed some new readers beautifully illustrated with

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full-page pictures. The new books, which had just been brought into the room, were given to the children with the brief direction, "Turn to page 85 and begin reading at the top of the page."

"Theirs not to reason why,  
Theirs not to make reply."

The obedient fingers turned to the page indicated, and the curious eyes were allowed no moment to linger over the pages which tempted them with their fascinating pictures. Yet here was the "Delectable Land," which might have been opened to them to their lasting advantage. Here the children's interest was assured, and no artificial incentive needed to be presented.

Another class, under similar conditions, had a different experience.

"Here are new books," the teacher said to the children. "You will enjoy

reading these stories, I know. But you will find pictures in them as well as stories. Before we read let us look at the pictures and enjoy them."

The children eagerly opened the books. They found, as a frontispiece, a copy of Rosa Bonheur's "Norman Sire."

The children talked about the picture, compared the horse with horses that they knew, admired the noble head, the fine eyes. As they turned the pages of their books they found other pictures of animals, "The Lions at Home" and "Coming from the Fair." Their comments were free, their questions ready. Nobody thought of the picture as a picture. The conversation centred about lions and horses only, and expressed the children's interest in animals.

It was the teacher who called the attention of the children to the name written underneath the first picture, "Rosa

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Bonheur.” This, they inferred, must be the name of the one who made the picture.

The teacher then explained that the pictures in the book were copied from photographs of the original pictures which the artist painted. If the children were to see the painting they would find it colored and much larger than the copies.

Looking again and with a new interest at the other pictures, the children discovered the same name written below them. “ Did Rosa Bonheur paint this picture, too ? ” “ And this ? ” “ Did she paint any others ? ” “ Does she paint now ? ” These questions answered, the children asked, “ Who painted the picture of the little girl tending the baby ? ” “ Is this the painter’s name under the picture ? ” “ Yes, Meyer von Bremen. On this page you will find another picture of his.” The children found the picture of “ The Pet Canary,” and talked

earnestly about it. "I like that picture. I wonder if this is the same little girl." "What queer chairs!" "What a funny window!" "This girl has been knitting, too."

The teacher threw some light upon the German interior, explaining that this was a picture of a home in the country where the artist lived. Then she questioned, "What did Meyer von Bremen paint for you?" "Children," was the ready response. "And what did Rosa Bonheur paint?" "Animals," came quite as readily. "Do the pictures tell you anything about the artists?" The children hesitated. "You remember 'The Children's Hour'?" suggested the teacher. "You thought that Mr. Longfellow wrote about children"—"Because he loved children," volunteered a child, as the teacher paused. "I should think Meyer von Bremen liked children, too,"



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observed another, thoughtfully. "And Rosa Bonheur must like animals," added a third.

They turned again to the pictures, and decided, after some discussion, that Rosa Bonheur not only loved animals, but was able to make us love them better by her painting.

The books were closed and carefully put away till time could be given for the reading, which the children now so earnestly desired. The lesson had been a simple one. To some casual observers it might have seemed no lesson at all. "Just looking at pictures!" But it opened to the pupils a new line of thought, and served to illuminate both picture and text. When the children read, the pictures, now made to interpret the text, themselves became teachers.

Though seemingly incidental, the lesson pointed toward such study of pic-

tures as should obtain in every school. One of the greatest pleasures of life is the delight in art, the creations of minds that enjoy the beautiful, and know how to make the world beautiful for others. We have learned to give to young children the poems which the world treasures. They commit these to memory. They learn to sing the hymns which the greatest of musicians have composed. In poetry, in music, we have begun to learn how to teach. But should we not teach the children to know and to love good pictures, as well as good poems and good music ?

In too many of our homes the picture is a stranger. Such teaching as tends to interest the children in the picture gallery or the art museum opens another avenue of pleasure and profit, adds one more resource to the lives which must often be hindered and bound. By all

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means, let us begin it, and learn how to use the wealth of material which lies at our hand.

In a Boston school the teacher has established a loan collection of pictures. The children have the privilege of keeping for a week the framed pictures which they choose to carry home. They learn to enjoy the pictures, and, so to speak, to read them. They look with new interest at all other pictures which come in their way, comparing them with the ones they have come to know. They visit the art museum and study the original from which their pictures are copied. Their lives are enriched by such teaching, their minds are furnished with pleasant memories, and their love of the beautiful is set growing.

Such study has a legitimate place in the school curriculum. Happily, it is now emphasized in some degree in the

Drawing. It should also appear in connection with the Reading. The picture is intended to throw light upon the lesson which is illustrated. The children should be taught to read the picture as well as to read the story.

Geography, as it is presented in good schools of the present day, well illustrates the necessity. The picture is often a photographic reproduction of the mountain, the cascade, the geyser, the surf. The text describes, as clearly as words can describe, but the picture is far more faithful. It brings the scene before the eyes of the child, while words, misapplied or misunderstood, often build a wall between the pupil and the scene which they attempt to portray. If the children learn to see all that the picture contains, they are helped in their study of the text. It is the part of wisdom, from the teacher's point of view, to

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make much of these aids, even if knowledge getting is the one goal in sight. It can hardly be doubted, however, that all teachers will recognize the greater need which is satisfied by such instruction. To know and to love these things so well worth knowing and loving is quite as worthy of achievement as the mastery of equations or the demonstration of a theorem.

If the Drawing does not admit of the teaching suggested, the Language Lesson, ever hospitably inclined, may be extended to include the study of the picture. Every teacher knows best what pictures she desires to present to her class, but, from common experience, a few inferences may be made.

Certainly the picture chosen for initial study should be one whose subject is interesting to the children, a picture which represents action or suggests a story.

Such pictures are Schreyer's "Imperial Courier," Meyer von Bremen's "Little Nurse," Millet's "Angelus," Landseer's "Saved." After the children have become interested in the picture they will wish to learn who painted it, just as they desire to know about the poet, after they have come to enjoy the poem. Then they are ready to look at the reprints of the other works of the artist, regardless of subject, and to ask questions about the artist and his works. So the interest deepens and the study grows, following this natural order.

Fortunately the abundance of cheap good reprints, and the careful illustration of text-books, place the means for such study within the reach of every teacher and pupil. It will not be long before the picture will take its proper place with the song and the poem as a factor in elementary education.

*He that loveth a book will never want a faithful friend, a wholesome counsellor, a cheerful companion, an effectual comforter. By study, by reading, by thinking, one may innocently divert and pleasantly entertain himself, as in all weathers, so in all fortunes.*

—ISAAC BURROWS.



## CHAPTER X.

### HINTS FOR READING LESSONS.

#### *Words at the Head of the Lesson.*

**I**T is not uncommon to find the lists of words which precede or follow the lessons of the so-called "regular reader" used as the only basis of the study of the lesson. This would be wise if the lists enumerated the only or the chief obstacles to the children's understanding of the lesson. But as a matter of fact, they must vary greatly in value, sometimes bearing no relation to the real needs of the individual class. They are prepared with the average child in mind,



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but as some one has humorously said, "The average child does not exist." They may prove very helpful to one class, and of no possible use to another.

Examine any such list with reference to your own class, or ask the children to study the list with you. You find that the first word is an old friend, the second is made up of two known words, the third is unfamiliar in both meaning and form, the fourth presents a variation from the ordinary rule of spelling, the fifth and the sixth are easy to master or are already well known.

After such a survey, the thoughtful pupil will "study" the third and fourth critically and carefully, the others having been disposed of in the first reading. Such an exercise is profitable, deserving the name of study. The routine direction, "Study the words at the head of the lesson twenty times, and copy them

five times," leads to careless droning over the page and ends in preventing any intelligent study.

*Reading "Without the Book."*

A visitor in a primary school was astonished by the rapid and fluent reading of a five-year-old who delivered "The Story of a Dog" with remarkable ease and precision. "May I see your book?" the visitor asked. The little lad passed the book to her with smiling consent. "But," she exclaimed, "there is nothing here that you have read." "Dear me!" cried the child, looking at the picture, "I got the wrong dog."

The writer remembers a child who explained with charming naïveté, "I can read my reader all through without the book." Upon being tested, he proved his statement.

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The constant repetition of the pages of the "regular reader" soon imparts this fatal facility, which often completely deceives the teacher. The ability to repeat the story, word for word, does not necessarily involve the power to recognize the words on any page. The children simply memorize the sentences to which they have so often listened, and are reciting by rote, not reading.

Just here the new lesson written upon the board, or the supplementary reading book, is effective. The new arrangement of familiar words demands thoughtful attention, and serves therefore as a test of skill. The teacher should guard against the common tendency to use a single lesson until it becomes useless.

*Word Study apart from the Reading Lesson.*

If the words which occur in the reading lesson present such difficulty to the children that their first efforts in reading are seriously hindered, it is wise to make the word study a separate exercise, preparing for the so-called reading lesson. This preparatory lesson, often called "the development lesson," should make the pupils so familiar with the form of the word that it at once suggests the meaning. If the meaning itself is new, there is need also of the explanatory or illustrative lesson. It may be wise to repeat the suggestion that the explanation does not always explain, and that special illustration is necessary in presenting new ideas to the children. In any case, however, the time taken for "sounding" the word, or the necessity

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for explaining its meaning, is an interruption to the reading as thought getting, and should be reduced to the lowest terms in the reading exercise. The better plan, with classes of young children, is to arrange a separate time for word study, as a preliminary to individual study of the lesson. Where it is possible to secure the necessary time, the order of the work might be as follows:

1. Class study of new words, with explanation and illustration by the teacher when necessary.

2. Individual study of the lesson at desks, or "busy work" employing new words.

3. Reading the lesson which has been studied.

4. Supplementary reading, sight reading, or review.

This plan is especially adapted to the first year of school, where the time is

largely given to language and reading. In the class study phonics finds its proper time and place. In the seat work children make some application of the knowledge just acquired. When the reading exercise takes place, the time should be given to reading, the attention being held to the thought in the lesson.

*Supplementary and Sight Reading.*

The supplementary book is intended to afford variety in practice for the young readers, and to prevent the memorizing process, with its hindrance to reading. Its use depends upon circumstances. It should sometimes be used as is the "regular reader": studied, read, and re-read—that is, if it is worth re-reading. It may be given to the pupils for silent reading only, or for individual reading when other work is done. Se-

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lected lessons from the supplementary reading may alternate with those of the more familiar book, or the books may be changed from week to week.

In "sight reading," so called, the book serves simply as a test of the pupil's power to read at sight, without definite preparation in the way of study. Such exercises should, of course, present no new difficulty which demands study. As soon as this becomes necessary, the character of the exercise is changed, and it becomes a "study of a lesson" instead of a test or review. The teacher should select, for sight reading, material of a simpler sort than that which is demanded in the current exercises in reading at that period. Second Grade classes may read First Readers. Third Grade classes may use Second Readers, and so on.

Of course this provision becomes useless as soon as the pupils have passed

the "learning to read" stage, and are reading for the sake of thought getting only, without reference to training in power to read. Then the supplementary books should be chosen purely with an eye to throwing light on other subjects studied, or for their literary value, and pleasure in reading. Mention has been made elsewhere of the value of school libraries as an aid to the reading habit. Here the Supplementary Reader loses its title, and advances to the grade of a "real book." Now the cultivation of the reading habit and the love of books is an immediate aim, and the book ceases to serve as a test merely. It is a means to an end, an instrument by whose use new knowledge can be gained or the pleasure of life enhanced. Therefore it is wise to spend carefully the money devoted to books, buying few of a kind, and many kinds now. For



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reference, for individual reading, for reading to the class, this collection of books is invaluable. The skilful teacher will plan many exercises which will reach far beyond the immediate lesson in their beneficent results.

### *Reading Poetry.*

Among the many schoolroom exercises which yield present profit, none other continues its dividends so far into the future as does the intelligent reading and memorizing of a good poem. It has been urged elsewhere that the teacher should frequently read good poetry to the children, often without comment, but sometimes repeating the reading again and again, until the children become familiar with the rhythm, question the meaning, and are ready to memorize the poem. Such exercises are immediately

helpful in other reading, while they store the sturdy young memory with treasures, promising enjoyment for future years, which can be gained in no other way. Childhood is the one fit season for amassing such wealth. It is well for the children if the teacher recognizes this opportunity. Just here it may be wise to refer to the interest which attends such exercises in schools where every class chooses a class poet, reading and memorizing selections from his works, and learning something about his life. From the lowest to the highest grade this work proves helpful, and the children's association with these authors is never forgotten. Something the memory will hold, do what we may. Let us supply materials worthy to endure, preventing the accumulation of stuff which is not merely of indifferent value, but is often positively harmful.

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### *Friday Afternoons.*

The old custom of setting aside a part of Friday afternoons for declamation and recitations is remembered with mingled feelings by the pupils who shared its advantages. Nevertheless the custom should be perpetuated, for such exercises afford an unusual opportunity for practice in reading and reciting for the sake of others. To read aloud so that our hearers can listen with pleasure, gives us the power and privilege of helping and pleasing others. No life is without such opportunities. It is wise to emphasize this accomplishment in our schools, and to expect our pupils to become competent to render this service.

Any exercise which accustoms the children to reading or reciting with ease, modesty, and simplicity, in the presence of, and for the sake of, others, adds ma-

terially to their ability to make themselves agreeable as well as useful.

The special exercise, when one class entertains another class in the hall, or when children recite for the audience of schoolmates and parents, differs from the ordinary exercise in motive. Why should one read plainly when everyone else holds a similar book and is reading the same paragraph? But to read to those who have no book, have never read the story, or really desire to hear it, that is another matter.

So, with no artificial manner, voice, or gesture, but with a pure and simple desire to please, let the children read and recite to one another, or to other classes, at least once a week, until the exercise becomes as natural as breathing. And let the power to thus minister to others become one of the common attainments of our pupils.

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### *Children as Teachers.*

The child's interpretation of that which he reads is often very different from the teacher's. Yet his rendering does not always disclose his thought. Conversation regarding the lesson brings out the children's notions, if there is freedom and confidence in the presence of the teacher. But nothing else affords so much light on the subject as the children's own questions, if they are allowed to question one another. Where the teacher monopolizes the questions, she often monopolizes the thinking, too. Let the children act the part of the teacher, and as they question one another, their own ideas will appear, while the teacher who listens thoughtfully will be able to teach according to the revelation which she hears.

*Management of the Reading Class.*

The abandonment of concert reading at once necessitates the reorganization of the reading class. "If I cannot have my children read in concert," one questions, "how can I keep them interested and attentive through the long reading hour?"

The way of escape from the difficulty is a simple one. Do not expect to arrange to have fifty pupils read at one period, unless there is some work worth doing to demand their attention. The plan of work will vary with the grade of the class and the aim of the lesson.

Is the teacher's purpose to introduce the class to the lesson thought? To teach them how to study the lesson? To discover what words or phrases or turns of expression present obstacles to the learners? Then fifty may be taught

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and questioned as well as one, and just as long as general interest and attention can be maintained—no longer.

Is the aim of the teacher to afford practice in oral reading, by drilling upon the rendering of a certain paragraph? Then let her limit the class to ten or twelve at most, leaving the other pupils to busy themselves with written work which admits of definite accomplishment. All pupils become weary of the countless repetitions of their mates, in their stumbling practice. They learn chiefly through their own doing, the correction of their own mistakes. And while the drill is confined to the few,

“ Satan finds some mischief still  
For idle *minds* to do.”

So the old hymn might be varied by the experienced teacher who remembers unnumbered cases of discipline which

have arisen from the monotonous drill exercises in which the wits of the majority of the class were unemployed. By all means, in such cases, drill a few pupils at a time, and let the others be profitably employed in conscious endeavor to accomplish something.

In older classes where the reading has passed the elementary stage, and the pupils are reading for information or enjoyment, neither length of lesson nor number of pupils need be considered. Here, without doubt, the interest in the subject will be paramount, and "method" may be forgotten. Now the children read for the love of reading, and the only gauge of time or number is the teacher's power to interest her class. The one aim is to get the message from the book, and to make it plain to those who hear. Desire is the spur to endeavor, and attention is at the command



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of interest. The teacher's one secret is the art of making her pupils book lovers.

### *Concert Reading.*

To save time, in the hurried day with its crowded program, is the teacher's constant desire, and it is not remarkable that, under pressure, achievement is measured by counting the minutes of recitation and numbering the facts learned or the questions answered. It is a common error to assume that mere lip repetition is valuable drill, and that "practice makes perfect," even when the practice is indifferent or unwise. Quantity is carefully measured, while quality is ignored, in such drill.

To this mistaken estimate the wide prevalence of concert recitation is due. If thirty children read at one time, it would seem that the recitation accomplishes

thirty times as much as would be accomplished by a single recitation in the same time. "I could not get through with the lesson," explains the teacher, "if I did not have my class read in concert."

The theory appears plausible to the mathematical mind. Upon inspection, however, its failings appear.

In what does the value of the lesson as a reading lesson consist? The exercise should aid the children in getting the thought or in expressing it fluently and naturally. The teacher should be assured that the mind of every reader is intelligently active in the thought getting, and that the practice in expression is such as will lead to independent skill.

But observe: in concert reading the individual difficulties are "skipped." While John, who fails to recognize a word, falters, hesitates, and halts, Jane,

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to whom it is an old friend, marches triumphantly on. John takes breath, and plunges in again when his stumbling-blocks have been safely passed (by his comrades). John's achievement was *nil*, likewise Jane's, for she knew the word before. As a teaching exercise, then, the concert reading is ineffective. It is safe to assume that it is difficult if not impossible for any teacher to know that all of her pupils are really reading all the time during the concert exercise, or that a seemingly good concert exercise really proves that all the members of the class can master, or have mastered, the lesson.

Again, as a practice in expression the concert exercise is harmful, because it ignores the individual expression and aims at an average movement, inflection, interpretation. The product is not the expression of the thought as it

appears to John, Jane, or Henry, but a composite which represents nobody. The sprightly Kate must wait for the ponderous Phœbe; the slow-moving James must lag behind the animated Jack. Let a dozen teachers attempt to read aloud in concert, without previous common training, and the statement will need no further argument.

To the writer the time given to concert reading in the elementary schools seems ill-spent. Definite teaching and practice are possible only when the pupils are considered as individuals. Droning and indifference are cultivated by the concert exercise.

The above statements apply to all exercises whose object is to teach reading. Declamation or recitation of the poem or paragraph which has been studied, read, and mastered by the individuals of the class, or which presents merely an

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imitation of the teacher's reading, is included under another head. It deals with known material, and presupposes training which leads to a common interpretation. Such recitation partakes of the nature of song, and here the power to render the thought in unison becomes an element of value. For such exercises special training should be given.

In schools where it is possible for the classes to meet in the hall for morning exercises, or even in preparation for the devotional exercises of any single class, such training is indispensable. To know how to read in responsive exercises, to join with others in the rendition of a favorite psalm, hymn, or other poem, is no trivial acquisition. It is worth while to include in our reading exercises such lessons as will develop this power. Does the ordinary concert exercise do this?

“ My country tiserty,  
Sweet lanter libbutty,”

a child sang happily in a primary school the other day. Upon investigation it fell out that several members of the class sang the same combination.

A parallel instance was reported recently by a teacher whose pupils begged to be allowed to recite

“ There’s an old dude left on the daisies and clover.”

Lovers of Jean Ingelow’s exquisite “ Songs of Seven ” may well take alarm, and inquire the cause of the difficulty.

Such recitation is useless so far as the thought in the song is concerned. No time was saved in these instances by omitting the individual recitation. Individual mastery of the selection should precede any exercise in concert reading.

*It is one thing to own a library ; it is, however, another to use it wisely. If I were to pray for a taste which should stand me instead under every variety of circumstances, and be a source of happiness and cheerfulness to me through life, and a shield against its ills, however things might go amiss and the world frown upon me, it would be a taste for reading. I speak of it, of course, only as a worldly advantage, and not in the slightest degree superseding or derogating from the higher office, and surer and stronger panoply of religious principles—but as a taste, an instrument, and a mode of pleasurable gratification. Give a man this taste and the means of gratifying it, and you can hardly fail of making a happy man.*

—SIR JOHN HERSCHEL.



## CHAPTER XI.

### THE USE OF THE LIBRARY.

In my garden I spend my days, in my library I spend my nights. My interests are divided between my geraniums and my books. With the flowers I am in the present; with the books I am in the past. I go into my library and all history unrolls before me. I breathe the morning air of the world while the scent of Eden's roses yet lingered in it, while it vibrated only to the world's first brood of nightingales and to the laugh of Eve.

I see the pyramids building; I hear the shoutings of the armies of Alexander; I feel the ground shake beneath the march of Cambyzes. I sit as in a theatre; the stage is Time, the play is the World. What a spectacle it is! What kingly pomp, what processions, file past; what cities burn to heaven,



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what crowds of captives are carried at the chariot wheels of conquerors ! I hear or cry, " Bravo ! " when the great actors come on, shaking the stage. I am a Roman emperor when I look at a Roman coin. I lift old Homer, and I shout Achilles in the trenches. The silence of the empeopled Syrian plains, the outcomings and ingoings of the patriarchs, Abraham and Ishmael, Isaac in the fields at eventide, Rebekah at the well, Jacob's guile, Esau's face reddened by the desert sunheat, Joseph's splendid funeral procession—all these things I find within the boards of my Old Testament.

What a silence in those old books, as of a half-peopled world ; what bleating of flocks, what green pastoral rest, what indubitable human existence ! Across brawling centuries of blood and war I hear the bleating of Abraham's flocks, the tinkling of the bells of Rebekah's camels.

Oh, men and women, so far separated yet so near, so strange yet so well known, by what miraculous power do I know you all ? Books are the true Elysian fields where the spirits of the dead converse, and into these fields a mortal may venture unappalled. What king's

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court can boast such company ? What school of philosophy such wisdom ?

There is Pan's pipe ; there are the songs of Apollo. Seated in my library at night, and looking on the silent faces of my books, I am occasionally visited by a strange sense of the supernatural. They are not collections of printed pages ; they are ghosts. I take one down, and it speaks with me in a tongue not now heard on earth, and of men and things of which it alone possesses the knowledge.

I call myself a solitary, but sometimes I think I misapply the term. No man sees more company than I do. I travel with mightier cohorts around me than ever did Timour or Genghis Khan on their fiery marches. I am a sovereign in my library ; but it is the dead, not the living, that attend my levees.

—ALEXANDER SMITH.

THE Free Public Library is often termed the People's College. It is established by communities that believe education to be the foundation of civic freedom as well as an element in

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human happiness. By taxation of the people these treasures of books are made free to all: the richest and the poorest alike. Here one's scanty library is reinforced by full and rare collections, and the entire care of the custodians is to make this treasure-house useful to all comers.

But the reports of the librarians, encouraging though they be, do not describe a state of general reading. A study of these reports will reveal the fact that only a small part of the ought-to-be reading public finds its way to the library and uses this marvellous opportunity.

If we question why the readers are so few, we shall doubtless arrive at certain conclusions. Aside from the duties and necessities which debar many would-be readers from using the library, we shall conclude that the majority of persons

not illiterate who fail to avail themselves of this opportunity have not learned to love books; while many others who have had considerable reading in school or at home have not learned how to make the stores of the library available.

Enough has been said, perhaps, regarding the necessity of teaching children to love books, to the end that they may have wholesome interests and simple and natural pleasures. Books reveal the experience of others, and yield to us the companionship of the wise and good. Sympathetic observation of the lives of boys and girls who have not been trained to this larger interest would drive us to renewed endeavors to open wide the doors to them, out of and away from the temptations which allure them to lower loves. The life that does not know how to find pleasure in a book, that turns to the saloon rather than to

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the library, is sad indeed. We cannot urge too strongly the early and continual teaching whose object is to make the children book-lovers.

But, if the young book-lover appears at the library door and fails to find the clue to the labyrinth where the words which he desires may be found, he may wander away again, never to return. If his love is strong, and the custodian learns his need, he may study his way into the desired paths; but it is evident to all readers that the library is most available to the best prepared, and that the vast treasures of even the free library are worthless to the ignorant. Further, we can but recognize that home reading and school reading do not always qualify the reader for study in a library. He must be taught how to use it, and somebody must teach him.

Home and school must supply this

need. The wise father and mother will go with the children to the library, and there teach them to use books; while in school, the teacher of reading will aim beyond the simple mastery of the text-book. No longer can she content herself with guiding her pupils through the Fifth Reader from page 1 to page 256. With her larger conception of reading, she knows now that her pupils must be taught to unlock other books, and she sets herself to teach them how to do this.

But *how*?—a practical question. This chapter would avail little did it fail to attempt an answer.

First, by including in her teaching such lessons as will show the use of books as tools. The student who hunts down a subject in the library looks through myriads of books, but he does not read them all. He learns first what

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books are likely to answer his question. All other books he excludes from his list. He learns further where to look for aid in his selected books, and turns at once to the helpful pages, excluding all others. So he reaches the chapter, the page, the line which contains the desired message, and achieves his end. The untrained worker loses himself in the labyrinth of books, and finds nothing.

Such ability to use books is not a gift; it is earned by thoughtful practice. The power to use reference books comes only through wisely using them. The art begins with the use of the dictionary and the supplementary reader, and here should the teacher first apply herself to teach the use of books of reference.

First, as to the dictionary. All grammar-school classes should be supplied with a good unabridged dictionary,

while every pupil should have access to a smaller one, and be taught to use it so constantly that he will consider it an equal necessity with his pocket-knife. Where children buy their own books, the possession of the dictionary should be urged. Ownership is equally desirable where books are supplied by the city or town. Nothing can take the place of it. The dictionary is the student's commonest tool.

Having dictionaries, the children should be taught to use them. Here they are. What are they? What do they contain? What are they good for? Of what use can they be to you?

A study of the book reveals to us that the dictionary tells us the meaning of unfamiliar words; it may therefore help to explain to us what we read. Or it gives us many meanings of words, in their various uses, thus helping us to choose,



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the fitting one. Again, it shows us the correct spelling and pronunciation of the words which we need to use in reading or speaking; while in our later study it reveals to us the grammatical uses of words, giving good authority for each use, and further explains the derivation or tells the history of the word.

Before leaving the grammar school, children should be able to gather all this help from the dictionary. In the lower grades—fourth and fifth—the lessons will be confined to the study of the dictionary as a means of learning the meaning, spelling, and correct pronunciation of the selected words.

The first step is a study of the arrangement of the book : the title, introduction, preface, keys to pronunciation, rules for spelling; then the lists of words, arranged in alphabetical order. What does that mean ? Who knows the mean-

ing of the order of the letters of the alphabet? Test the class to discover this. Often the first lack appears here. By rapid recitation both forward and backward, and varied questions, make this knowledge available here. "Does S come before or after M, U, G, Q, W? In which half of the alphabet shall I find X, L, F, T? etc. I am turning the leaves of the dictionary to find the word 'Travel.' I open to a page of words beginning with M. Shall I turn forward or backward?" By such tests oft repeated, dictionary in hand, the children accustom themselves to the alphabetical order. Do not forget that it must be taught. It is not discovered by intuition.

After tracing the word to its letter, it remains to be found upon the page—a more difficult study of alphabetical arrangement. The child who attempts to find the word "Travel" finds the Ta's,

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but, with his limited knowledge, stays to rest his eyes upon Table, Tack, Tall, Tank, etc., in his likely-to-be-vain search. Now he must study with his teacher the fuller detail of alphabetical order. The word to be found begins with Tr. Let him leave Ta, Te, Ti to find Tr, and then must he follow on with his finger to Trav; and now slowly through this column to the appointed word.

The order being thus made clear, a double practice should be given, to fix it in his mind: first, finding chosen words in the dictionary in the quickest possible time; second, making lists of words in alphabetical order.

These lessons may seem superfluously simple and mechanical, but it is due to the omission of such teaching that so many hours are wasted in the blind search after the contents of books, and

that so many dictionaries are fresh-edged, unused.

Thus far the pupil has simply found the way to his word. Now he must learn to read what the dictionary tells him about it. Here further knowledge is required.

He finds the word so divided and marked as to enable him to pronounce it correctly, if he knows enough. But first he must know how to pronounce the syllables into which it is divided, and to translate the marks used for his benefit. Syllabification and diacritical marks constitute the subject of the next series of lessons.

The first is not so minor a matter as it may seem at first sight. Proper division into syllables is necessary to proper pronunciation of syllables, and a correct naming of the consecutive syllables means correct pronunciation of the word.

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The children's trick, which often confounds the scholar, proves this. "Pronounce ba-cka-che," they demand, dictating the syllables as written. After sufficiently enjoying the scholar's discomfiture, they pronounce the common word, backache. It is no more than fair to give him a taste of their daily vicissitudes. All teachers know how children are daily lost in the mazes of syllabification. It would be well to avert this evil, and lead to a more helpful reading of the dictionary, by giving lessons whose object is the mastery of syllables. Separating familiar words into their syllables and pronouncing by syllable at sight are excellent exercises, and they may well displace some of the formal and mechanical study of never-to-be-used lists of words.

Many words are mastered for all time as soon as the art of syllabification is

learned. For others there remains, however, the need of the diacritical marks.

As teachers know (but as children seldom discover), those marks exist simply as aids to pronunciation. They vary, in different dictionaries. It is, therefore, necessary that children should study the key to pronunciation in the dictionary which they use. As an aid to their memories, an epitome of this key is printed at the bottom of every page, that he who runs may read. If the mark is not recognized, a glance shows them the value of the same marked vowel in a familiar word. The sound of the unfamiliar word is made plain to them if they have learned to read the dictionary. Drill in pronouncing columns of the words found in the dictionary, is an aid to the rapid acquirement of power to translate these equivalents, while, until this power is won, the pu-

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pil may be helped by marking familiar words in accordance with the key.

The mastery of the alphabetical arrangement and syllabification and pronunciation being assured, there remains the study of the grouped meanings and the derivation, with attention to grammatical use. As soon as the pupil knows the parts of speech, the various uses of words are made plain to him, and he intelligently follows the dictionary column which exhibits a word as noun, verb, adjective, or adverb. If his object is to discover the verb meaning, he passes the others. If the earlier and perhaps obsolete meanings do not apply, he reads on until the fitting definition is reached. If the definition itself is not plain to him, he "looks up" the unfamiliar words contained in it. But he keeps at work until he has made himself master of the word for whose meaning he sought. Quota-

tions showing standard use are read and considered. The paragraph or sentence containing the new word is re-read, illumined by the new meaning.

Such a lesson has in it the virtue of a language lesson. The new word, with its precious cargo, has become the child's possession, and he can send it voyaging to ports he desires to reach with his thought. Further, through such exercises, he learns to master books.

The more mature student will carefully con the root-meaning, and follow the word through its devious history. That work, in its detail, must wait for the higher grades and the college. But with such thoroughness as has been outlined, the grammar grade pupil may make the dictionary his strong ally and unfailing friend. It behooves us to teach him the art.

Books of reference should be made



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available to the pupils, as is the dictionary, by lessons which show their use. The Atlas, the Cyclopedia, the Compendium, should be explained, and opportunities for their use should be created. So all minor books—grammars, histories, geographies—should be consulted by the children, and compared with their own. In such consultation the index or table of contents should serve its purpose. The pupil should not be allowed to search the book from cover to cover for his bit of information, but should be taught to look for it, by the help of the index, in its proper place, just as he learned to find the word on the page of a dictionary. Through such study, children may develop the habit of turning to books for information and enlightenment. They will know how to seek and find. We cannot overestimate easily the value of such a habit and its

## The Use of the Library. 241

accompanying tendencies in their after life.

We have spoken thus far of the child's use of single books under the direction of the teacher. A few words further in regard to the school library, which should be an introduction to the Public Library.

In these days many schools are provided with the nucleus of a library. Every school should have one. A few shelves of books, well chosen and well used—these are next in importance to the teacher in the equipment of a school. By properly using such books, the children learn how to choose and to use their own books when they get them, and meanwhile how best to avail themselves of the Public Library.

In order to afford enough practice in finding what is in the books which are within reach, the teacher should assign

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to the pupils work which will necessitate the use of these books. The reading lesson speaks of the cultivation of cotton. Ask John or Joseph to learn whether any book in the library throws light on the cultivation or manufacture of cotton. The boy first makes up his mind what books will be likely to contain this information, and then, by use of the indexes in the chosen books, discovers his item, which he brings as his contribution to the class. What he learns about cotton is of far less value to him than what he gains through searching for the item. Again, the history lesson treats of the war for independence. The teacher, instead of confining the pupils to memorizing the work on the pages of the school history, sends them to the bookshelves to consult the English histories which shall tell the children something of George III. and the Eng-

lish statesmen of his time. By and by they have gained not only some facility in the use of books, but the knowledge that some books are of greater use than others in the lines of their study.

It is but a step, now, from the school library to the Public Library, and this step should be taken when the children feel the limitations of their bookshelves. Their quest must take its beginning in their need; not in the teacher's advice, but in their inclination. John cannot find in any book in the school library what he wants to know about William Pitt. Very well. Does he know any book that would give him the desired information? There may be books at the library, he volunteers. Ah, yes. How can he find out? By going there. Susan suggests that the library catalogue will tell him whether he can find there just what he wishes. And now

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the school comes into possession of the catalogue of the Free Public Library of the town—owns it *because* the children need to use it. John finds in the catalogue the names of the books which he thinks may contain the object of his search. Here the teacher helps him by pointing out, from her fuller knowledge, the books which will be simple enough to be of service to him. Or the custodian of the library lends a hand, and names the books which will be most helpful.

We may readily see that here begins another series of lessons which, unfortunately, rarely makes its appearance. Inside the library door, the youthful seeker after light struggles to get the book which he desires. He must learn the machinery of the library, and somebody must teach him. If the teacher knows the librarian and the librarian

knows the teacher, and both are interested in the boy, we have a happy state of affairs. His card is filled out for him and properly signed. He is now allowed to take books for himself. He must be told where to get them and how to get them; what to do with them when he gets them; what to do if he cannot get them; how, and when, and where to return them; what privileges he may have in the use of them. Well for the boy if his two friends and co-laborers make it worth while for him to use the library in these early days! Ah, who shall tell us how to correctly mark in per cents the value of this boy's acquisition, or the worth of the teacher's instruction?

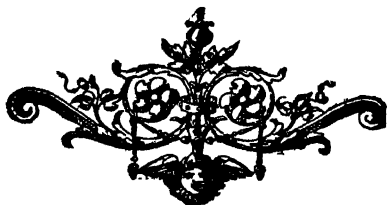
In many of our cities, this coöperation of the library and the school exists, and proves its usefulness. Teachers are supplied with teachers' cards, allowing them to take six books at a time and retain

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them for a long time. Classes are supplied with books. Boxes of books are carried from school to school. Duplicates of much-desired books are secured from the librarian. Children are taken to the library by the teacher, and the classes study on the spot the operation of the system, and familiarize themselves with its plan of action. Children are sent from school to consult reference books, to study the collections of photographs, or the mural decorations in the building. The Boston Public Library affords an example, not only of stateliness of building and beauty of decoration, but of efficiency of the system by which its recent librarian, Mr. Herbert L. Putnam, did much to bring the library within the reach of the school-children throughout the city.

If we rightly estimate the value of this tendency to read and this love of books,

we shall be willing to subordinate some of the formerly accepted work of the schools to this essential tuition. Shall we continue to spend money for our public libraries? If so, let us insure the return of our investment a hundredfold, by fitting our children to make use of the privileges which are thus afforded them, and teaching them to know the best books.







[In response to the requests made by many different teachers, I have prepared a list of books, stories, and poems which are suitable for reading or reciting to children. In all cases the selections have been tested with numbers of children, often with numbers of classes, and the list represents the thoughtful experience of many and different teachers. In choosing, however, the teacher must be guided by her knowledge of her own children. It is unwise to accept without question the judgment of another, who may teach under conditions very different from those which exist in the class of the seeker. Reference to the list may, however, prevent fruitless excursions to the library for unnecessary reading of the books which would be read only to be discarded. It will be safe to make selections from the list for any class in the public schools.—S. L. A.]

*Give me leave*

*T' enjoy myself; that place that does contain  
My books, the best companions, is to me  
A glorious court, where hourly I converse  
With the old sages and philosophers;  
And sometimes, for variety, I confer  
With kings and emperors, and weigh their  
counsels;  
Calling their victories, if unjustly got,  
Unto a strict account, and, in my fancy,  
Deface their ill-placed statues. Can I then  
Part with such constant pleasures to embrace  
Uncertain vanities? No; be it your care  
T' augment your heap of wealth; it shall be  
mine  
T' increase in knowledge.*

—BEAUMONT & FLETCHER.



## CHAPTER XII.

### A LIST OF BOOKS

*Which Have been Tested and Found  
Helpful in the School-room.*

*(Alphabetically arranged.)*

#### GENERAL READING.

**A**LICE in Wonderland. Lewis Carroll.

Among the Isles of Shoals. Celia Thaxter.

Architects of Fate. Orison Swett Marden.

At the Back of the North Wind.  
George Macdonald.

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Aunt Martha's Corner Cupboard. M.  
and E. Kirby.

Being a Boy. Charles Dudley War-  
ner.

Betty Leicester. Sarah Orne Jewett.  
Bird's Christmas Carol, The. Kate  
Douglas Wiggin.

Bits of Talk. Helen Hunt Jackson.  
Bits of Travel. Helen Hunt Jackson.  
Black Beauty. Anna Sewall.  
Boy's Froissart. Sidney Lanier.  
Boy's Percy. Sidney Lanier.  
Braided Straws. Elizabeth E. Foulke.  
Child Life in Prose. John Greenleaf  
Whittier.

Child's World, In the. Emilie Pouls-  
son.

Christmas Carol. Charles Dickens.  
Court of King Arthur, The. W. H.  
Frost.

Cricket on the Hearth, The. Charles  
Dickens.

Daffydowndilly. Nathaniel Hawthorne.

Easy Steps for Little Feet. Swinton and Cathcart.

Eight Cousins. Louisa M. Alcott.

Fifty Famous Stories Retold. James Baldwin.

Five Little Peppers. Margaret Sidney.

Four Macnichols, The. William Black.

Golden Book of Choice Reading. Swinton and Cathcart.

Great Stone Face. Nathaniel Hawthorne.

Gulliver's Travels. Jonathan Swift.

Heart of Oak, Books I.-VI. Charles Eliot Norton.

How Success is Won. Sarah K. Bolton.

Hunt for the Captain, The. Oliver Wendell Holmes.

Hunting of the Deer, The. Charles Dudley Warner.

## 254 Reading: How to Teach It.

In His Name. Edward Everett Hale.

In the Child's World. Emilie Poulsson.

Jackanapes. Juliana Horatia Ewing.

Jan of the Windmill. Juliana Horatia Ewing.

Jungle Book. Rudyard Kipling.

Jungle Book, Second. Rudyard Kipling.

Kindergarten Stories. Sara E. Wiltse.

King of the Golden River, The. John Ruskin.

Last of the Mohicans, The. James Fenimore Cooper.

Letters from a Cat. Helen Hunt Jackson.

Life and Letters of Louisa M. Alcott.

Life of the Cary Sisters, The. Mary Clemmer Ames.

Little Lame Prince, The. Dinah Maria Mulock.

Little Lord Fauntleroy. Frances Hodgson Burnett.

Little Men. Louisa M. Alcott.

Little Women. Louisa M. Alcott.

Little Saint Elizabeth. Frances Hodgson Burnett.

Lob-Lie-By-The-Fire. Juliana Horatia Ewing.

Lorna Doone. R. D. Blackmore.

Melchior's Dream. Juliana Horatia Ewing.

Modern Vikings, The. H. H. Boyeson.

Mopsa the Fairy. Jean Ingelow.

Bre'r Rabbit. Joel Chandler Harris.

Nellie's Silver Mine. Helen Hunt Jackson.

Old-Fashioned Girl, The. Louisa M. Alcott.

Old Stories of the East. James Baldwin.

Pilgrim's Progress. John Bunyan.

Play Days. Sarah Orne Jewett.

Polly Oliver's Problem. Kate Douglas Wiggin.



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Rab and His Friends. Thomas Brown.  
Rainbows for Children. Lydia Maria  
Child.

Robinson Crusoe. Daniel Defoe.  
Rollo Books. Jacob Abbott.  
Rose in Bloom, The. Louisa M. Al-  
cott.

Rules of Conduct. George Washing-  
ton.

Silas Marner. George Eliot.  
Six to Sixteen. Juliana Horatia  
Ewing.

Spy, The. James Fenimore Cooper.  
Stories for Children. Edward Everett  
Hale.

Stories from Plato. Mary E. Burt.  
Stories Told to Children. Jean Inge-  
low.

Story Hour, The. Kate Douglas Wig-  
gin.

Story of a Bad Boy, The. Thomas  
Bailey Aldrich.

Story of the Golden Age, A. James Baldwin.

Story of Roland, The. James Baldwin.

Story of a Short Life, The. Juliana Horatia Ewing.

Swiss Family Robinson. Johann Weiss.

Tales from Shakespeare. Charles Lamb.

Tales from Shakespeare. Charles Morris.

Tales of the Alhambra. Washington Irving.

Three of Us. Joel Chandler Harris.

Timothy's Quest. Kate Douglas Wiggin.

Tom Brown's Schooldays. Thomas Hughes.

Twilight Stories. Elizabeth E. Foulke.

Two Little Pilgrims' Progress. Frances Hodgson Burnett.

Under the Lilacs. Louisa M. Alcott.

## 258 Reading : How to Teach It.

Undine. Baron Fouqui.

Water Babies. Charles Kingsley.

We and the World. Juliana Horatia Ewing.

We Girls. Mrs. A. D. T. Whitney.

What Katy Did. Susan Coolidge.

### NATURE STUDY.

Animals, Wild and Tame. Anna C. Davis.

Bird Ways. Olive Thorne Miller.

Bird World. Stickney and Hoffman.

Birds and Bees. John Burroughs.

Birds Through an Opera Glass. Florence Merriam.

Citizen Bird. Mabel Osgood Wright.

Eye-Spy. William Hamilton Gibson.

Fairyland of Flowers. Mara L. Pratt.

Fairyland of Science. Arabella Buckley.

Few Familiar Flowers, A. Margaret Morley.

Four-Handed Folk. Olive Thorne Miller.

From Flower to Fruit. Jane H. Newell.

From Seed to Leaf. Jane H. Newell.

In Nesting Time. Olive Thorne Miller.

Life and Her Children. Arabella Buckley.

Little Flower Folks. Mara L. Pratt.

Little Folks in Feathers and Fur. Olive Thorne Miller.

Madam How and Lady Why. Arabella Buckley.

My Saturday Bird Class. Olive Thorne Miller.

My Summer in a Garden. Charles Dudley Warner.

Pacific Nature Stories. Harr Wagner.

Pepacton. John Burroughs.

## 260 Reading : How to Teach It.

Plant World. Frank Vincent.

Rambler's Lease, A. Bradford Torrey.

Seaside and Wayside. Jane Andrews.

Sharp Eyes. William Hamilton Gibson.

Sharp Eyes. John Burroughs.

Short Stories of Our Shy Neighbors.  
Mrs. M. A. B. Kelly.

Song of Life. Margaret Morley.

Stories Mother Nature Told Her Children. Jane Andrews.

Story of the Birds, The. James N. Baskett.

Succession of Forest Trees. Henry David Thoreau.

Through Magic Glasses. Arabella Buckley.

Toilers of the Sea. Victor Hugo.

Wake Robin. John Burroughs.

Walden. Henry David Thoreau.

Winners in Life's Race. Arabella Buckley.

POETRY.

Blue Poetry Book. Andrew Lang.

Child Life in Poetry. John Greenleaf  
Whittier.

Child's Garden of Verse. Robert  
Louis Stevenson.

Children's Treasury of English Song.  
Francis Palgrave.

Courtship of Miles Standish. Henry  
Wadsworth Longfellow.

Eugene Field Book. Mary E. Burt.

Evangeline. Henry Wadsworth Long-  
fellow.

Grandmother's Story of Bunker Hill.  
Oliver Wendell Holmes.

Hiawatha. Henry Wadsworth Long-  
fellow.

Homer's Iliad.

Homer's Odyssey.

Lady of the Lake. Walter Scott.

## 262 Reading: How to Teach It.

Lays of Ancient Rome. Thomas Babington Macaulay.

Nature in Verse. Mary I. Lovejoy.

Poems for Children. Celia Thaxter.

Poems of American Patriotism. Brander Matthews.

Poetry for Children. Samuel Eliot.

Poetry for Home and School. Anna C. Brackett and Ida M. Eliot.

Poetry of the Seasons. Mary I. Lovejoy.

School Speaker. Harper's. (Selections for Arbor Day and Decoration Day.)

Snow-Bound. John Greenleaf Whittier.

Tales of a Wayside Inn. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

Vision of Sir Launfal, The. James Russell Lowell.

MYTHS, FABLES, FAIRY TALES.

Adventures of a Brownie. Dinah Maria Mulock.

Adventures of Ulysses. Charles Lamb.  
Æsop's Fables.

Age of Fable. Thomas Bulfinch.

Blue Fairy Book. Andrew Lang.

Bulfinch's Mythology. Thomas Bulfinch.

Cinderella.

Classic Myths. Charles Mills Gayley.

Fables and Folk Stories. Horace E. Scudder.

Fables and Rhymes for Beginners. John G. and Thomas E. Thompson.

Fairy Tale and Fable. John G. and Thomas E. Thompson.

Fairy Tales. Charles De Garmo.

Fairy Tales. Grimm.

Fairy Tales. Hans Christian Andersen.



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Gods and Heroes. Francillon.

Greek Heroes. Charles Kingsley.

In Mythland. Helen Beckwith.

Jack and the Beanstalk.

Little Red Riding Hood. Andrew  
Lang.

Myths of Northern Lands. H. A.  
Guerber.

Old-Fashioned Fairy Book. Eliza-  
beth Harrison.

Old Greek Stories. James Baldwin.

Stories of the Old World. Alfred  
Church.

Stories of the Golden Age.

Story of Siegfried. James Baldwin.

Story of the Niebelungen Lied. Mary .  
E. Burt.

Story of Ulysses. Mary E. Burt.

Tales of Troy. Charles De Garmo.

Tanglewood Tales. Nathaniel Haw-  
thorne.

Wonder Book. Nathaniel Hawthorne.

## GEOGRAPHY.

Adrift in the Ice Fields. Captain Hall.

Around the World in the Yacht *Sunbeam*. Lady Brassey.

Boy Travellers. Knox.

Brook and Brook Basins. Alexander Frye.

Children of the Cold. Lieutenant Schwatka.

Coal and Coal Mines. Homer Green.

Each and All. Jane Andrews.

Family Flights. Edward Everett Hale.

Feats on the Fiord. Harriet Martineau.

From Ponkapog to Pesth. Thomas Bailey Aldrich.

In Brook and Bayou. Clara Kern Bayliss.

Java, the Pearl of the East. Mrs. S. J. Higginson.

## 266 Reading : How to Teach It.

Little Lucy's Wonderful Globe. Charlotte M. Yonge.

Little People of Asia. Miller.

Seven Little Sisters. Jane Andrews.

Stories of Other Lands. James Johnston.

Under Six Flags. M. E. Davis.

Under the Southern Cross. Edward Ballou.

Views Afoot. Bayard Taylor.

World and Its People, The. Books I.-IX. Larkin Dunton.

World by the Fireside, The. Mary and Elizabeth Kirby.

Zigzag Journeys. Hezekiah Butterworth.

### HISTORY.

American Historical Tales. Charles Morris.

Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin.

Book of American Explorers. Thomas Wentworth Higginson.

Boyhood of Lincoln, The. Hezekiah Butterworth.

Boys of '61. Charles Carleton Coffin.

Boys of '76. Charles Carleton Coffin.

Boys Who Became Famous. Sarah K. Bolton.

Building of the Nation. Charles Carleton Coffin.

Colonial Massachusetts: Stories of the Old Bay State. Mrs. S. E. Dawes.

Drumbeats of the Nation. Charles Carleton Coffin.

England, Young Folks' History of. Charlotte M. Yonge.

English Historical Tales. Charles Morris.

First Steps in the History of our Country. W. A. and A. M. Mowry.

France, Young Folks' History of. Charlotte M. Yonge.

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George Washington. Horace Scudder.  
German Historical Tales. Charles  
Morris.

Girls Who Became Famous. Sarah  
K. Bolton.

Greece, Young Folks' History of.  
Charlotte M. Yonge.

Greek Home Life. Mary E. Burt.

Heroes of History. George Make-  
peace Towle.

Heroic Deeds. James Johonnot.

Historic Boys. Elbridge S. Brooks.

Historic Girls. Elbridge S. Brooks.

Historic Pilgrimages in New England.  
Edwin M. Bacon.

Historical Readers. Longmans' Ship.

Historical Tales:

American,

German,

Greek,

Roman. Charles Morris.

History Readers. Mrs. W. W. Wilson.

History of the United States. Thomas Wentworth Higginson.

Joan of Arc. Mary E. Burt.

Legends of Charlemagne. Mary E. Burt.

Madam Roland. Mary E. Burt.

Making of New England, The. Samuel Adams Drake.

Man Without a Country, A. Edward Everett Hale.

Old Times in the Colonies. Charles Carleton Coffin.

Plutarch for Boys and Girls.

Prince and Pauper. Thomas Clemens (Mark Twain).

Rescue of Cuba, The. Andrew S. Draper.

Standish of Standish. Jane Austin.

Stories from Herodotus. Alfred J. Church.

Stories of Great Americans for Little Americans. Edward Eggleston.

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Stories of our Country. James Johnston.

Stories of the Red Children. Dorothy Brooks.

Stories from English History. Grace Aguilar.

Story of Liberty. Charles Carleton Coffin.

Ten Boys on the Road from Long Ago to Now. Jane Andrews.

War for Independence. John Fiske.

Watchfires of '76. Samuel R. Drake.

Winning His Way. Charles Carleton Coffin.

Young Folks' Histories:

Greece,

Rome,

France,

England. Charlotte M. Yonge.

Vasco da Gama. George Makepeace Towle.





There is another view of reading, which, though it is obvious enough, is seldom taken, I imagine, or at least acted upon; and that is, that in the course of our reading we should lay up in our minds a store of goodly thoughts in well-wrought words, which should be a living treasure of knowledge always with us, and from which, at various times and amidst all the shifting of circumstances, we might be sure of drawing some comfort, guidance, and sympathy. . . . A man whose mind is enriched with the best sayings of his own country is a more independent man, walks the streets in a town, or the lanes in the country, with far more delight than he would otherwise, and is taught by wise observers of man and nature to observe for himself. Sancho Panza, with his proverbs, is a great deal better than he would have been without them; and I contend that a man has something in himself to meet troubles and difficulties, small or great, who has stored in his mind some of the best things that have been said about troubles and difficulties.

—SIR ARTHUR HELPS.



## CHAPTER XIII.

### A LIST OF POEMS

*Suitable for Use in the School-room.*

THE list is intended to be suggestive merely. Nearly all the poems are well known, and need only to be recalled to the mind of the teacher. They can readily be found at any good library. Most of them are suitable for memorizing. All may be read with advantage to the children in most grades.

### POEMS.

Abou Ben Adhem. Leigh Hunt.

Aladdin. James Russell Lowell.

## 274 Reading: How to Teach It.

Alexander Selkirk. William Cowper.  
Ancient Mariner, The. Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

April. Helen Hunt Jackson.

April Day, An. Mrs. Southey.

Arnold Von Winkelried. James Montgomery.

Autumn Fashions. Edith Thomas.

Bannockburn. Robert Burns.

Barefoot Boy, The. John Greenleaf Whittier.

Battle Hymn of the Republic. Julia Ward Howe.

Better Land, The. Felicia D. Hemans.

Bingen on the Rhine. Caroline Norton.

Blue and the Gray, The. F. M. Finch.

Break, Break, Break! Alfred Tennyson.

Breathes there the man, etc. Walter Scott.

Brook, The. Alfred Tennyson.

Bugle Song, The. Alfred Tennyson.

Builders, The. Henry Wadsworth  
Longfellow.

Burial of Moses, The. Mrs. Alexander.

Burial of Sir John Moore. Charles  
Wolfe.

Captain's Daughter, The. James T.  
Fields.

Casabianca. Felicia D. Hemans.

Centennial Hymn. John Greenleaf  
Whittier.

Chambered Nautilus. Oliver Wendell  
Holmes.

Charge of the Light Brigade. Alfred  
Tennyson.

Cloud, The. Percy Bysshe Shelley.

Commemoration Ode. James Russell  
Lowell. (Lines on Lincoln.)

Courtship of Miles Standish. Henry  
Wadsworth Longfellow.

Daffodils. William Wordsworth.

## 276 Reading: How to Teach It.

Day is Done, The. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

Death of the Flowers. William Cullen Bryant.

Destruction of Sennacherib, The. George Gordon, Lord Byron.

Echo. Jean Ingelow.

Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard. Thomas Gray.

Emerson (from "Fable for Critics"). James Russell Lowell.

Eternal Goodness. John Greenleaf Whittier.

Evangeline. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

Eve of Waterloo, The. George Gordon, Lord Byron.

Excelsior. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

Fable for Critics (selections on Emerson, Whittier, Hawthorne, Holmes). James Russell Lowell.

- February. Mrs. A. D. T. Whitney.  
Fiftieth Birthday of Agassiz, The.  
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.  
First Psalm. Bible.  
First Snowfall, The. James Russell  
Lowell.  
Flowers. Henry Wadsworth Long-  
fellow.  
Forest Hymn, The. William Cullen  
Bryant.  
Forest Song. W. H. Venable.  
Forsaken Merman, The. Robert  
Browning.  
Fringed Gentian, The. William Cul-  
len Bryant.  
Frost Spirit, The. John Greenleaf  
Whittier.  
Ginevra. Samuel Rogers.  
Good Great Man, The. Samuel Tay-  
lor Coleridge.  
Good Little Sister, The. Phœbe  
Cary.

## 278 Reading: How to Teach It.

Good Night and Good Morning. Lord Houghton.

Goody Blake and Harry Gill. William Wordsworth.

Gray Swan, The. Alice Cary.

Great, Wide, Beautiful World. Lilliput Lectures.

Hawthorne (in "Fable for Critics"). James Russell Lowell.

Heritage, The. James Russell Lowell.

Hervé Riel. Robert Browning.

Hiawatha. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

High Tide on the Coast of Lincolnshire. Jean Ingelow.

Hohenlinden. Thomas Campbell.

Holmes (in "Fable for Critics"). James Russell Lowell.

Horatius at the Bridge. Thomas Babington Macaulay.

How the Leaves came Down. Susan Coolidge.

How They Brought the Good News  
from Ghent to Aix. Robert Browning.

Humblebee, The. Ralph Waldo Em-  
erson.

If I can Stop one Heart from Break-  
ing. Emily Dickinson.

Incident of the French Camp. Robert  
Browning.

In School Days. John Greenleaf Whit-  
tier.

I Remember, I Remember. Thomas  
Hood.

Jack Frost Looked Forth. Jane Gould.  
King's Jewel, The. Phœbe Cary.

Ladder of St. Augustine. Henry  
Wadsworth Longfellow.

Landing of the Pilgrims. Felicia D.  
Hemans.

Last Leaf, The. Oliver Wendell  
Holmes.

Last Walk in Autumn, The. John  
Greenleaf Whittier.



## 280 Reading : How to Teach It.

Leak in the Dike, A. Phœbe Cary.

Legend of St. Christopher. Helen  
Hunt Jackson.

Legend of the Northland, A. Phœbe  
Cary.

Lincoln (in " Commemoration Ode ").  
James Russell Lowell.

Little Bell. Thomas Westwood.

Little Gottlieb. Phœbe Cary.

Little Gustava. Celia Thaxter.

Lochiel's Warning. Walter Scott.

Lochinvar. Walter Scott.

Longing. James Russell Lowell.

Lost Youth, My. Henry Wadsworth  
Longfellow.

Lucknow, Defence of. Alfred Tenny-  
son.

Lucknow, Pipes of. John Greenleaf  
Whittier.

Lucknow, Relief of. Robert Lowell.

Maidenhood. Henry Wadsworth  
Longfellow.

- Man's a Man, A. Robert Burns.  
March. Helen Hunt Jackson.  
March. William Wordsworth.  
Marco Bozzaris. Fitz-Greene Halleck.  
May. Helen Hunt Jackson.  
Morte d'Arthur. Alfred Tennyson.  
Mountain and the Squirrel, The. Ralph  
Waldo Emerson.  
My Triumph. John Greenleaf Whit-  
tier.  
Nest Eggs. Robert Louis Stevenson.  
Night and Day. Robert Louis Ste-  
venson.  
Oak, The. James Russell Lowell.  
Ocean, The. George Gordon, Lord  
Byron.  
Old Clock on the Stairs, The. Henry  
Wadsworth Longfellow.  
Old Ironsides. Oliver Wendell Holmes.  
Old Tray. Robert Browning.  
One-Hoss Shay, The. Oliver Wendell  
Holmes.

## 282 Reading: How to Teach It.

One, Two, Three. Horatio Bunner.

Order for a Picture, An. Alice Cary.

Our Good President. Phœbe Cary.

Over River and Through Wood.

Lydia Maria Child.

Over the Hills in Palestine. Harriet  
Prescott Spofford.

Owl Critic, The. James T. Fields.

Pictures from Appledore. James Rus-  
sell Lowell.

Pied Piper, The. Robert Browning.

Pipes at Lucknow. John Greenleaf  
Whittier.

Plant a Tree. Lucy Larcom.

Planting of the Apple Tree, The.  
William Cullen Bryant.

Polonius to Laertes. William Shake-  
speare.

Present Crisis, The. James Russell  
Lowell.

Prisoner of Chillon, The. George Gor-  
don, Lord Byron.

Psalm, My. John Greenleaf Whittier.

Psalm, Nineteenth. Bible.

Psalm, Twenty-third. Bible.

Psalm, Ninetieth. Bible.

Quality of Mercy (Merchant of Venice).

William Shakespeare.

Rabbis, The Two. John Greenleaf Whittier.

Ratisbon; or, An Incident of the French Camp. Robert Browning.

Receiving an Eagle's Quill from Lake Superior, On. John Greenleaf Whittier.

Relief of Lucknow, The. Robert Lowell.

Rhæcus. James Russell Lowell.

Rising in 1776, The. Thomas Buchanan Read.

Robert of Lincoln. William Cullen Bryant.

Sandpiper, The. Celia Thaxter.

Santa Filomena. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

## 284 Reading: How to Teach It.

School Days, In. John Greenleaf Whittier.

September Hymn. Helen Hunt Jackson.

Shepherd of King Admetus, The. James Russell Lowell.

Sheridan's Ride. Thomas Buchanan Read.

Sing, Little Children, Sing. Celia Thaxter.

Skeleton in Armor, The. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

Skipper Ireson's Ride. John Greenleaf Whittier.

Snow Flakes. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

Snow Storm. William Cullen Bryant.

Snow Storm. Ralph Waldo Emerson.

Song of Marion's Men, The. William Cullen Bryant.

Song of the Chattahoochee, The. Sidney Lanier.

Song of the Shirt, The. Thomas Hood.

Songs of Seven. Jean Ingelow.

Spacious Firmament on High, The. Joseph Addison.

Story of a Blackbird, The. Alice Cary.

Suthin' in a Pastoral Line (from "Biglow Papers"). James Russell Lowell.

Tales of a Wayside Inn. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

Talking in their Sleep. Edith M. Thomas.

Tempest, The. James T. Fields.

Thanatopsis. William Cullen Bryant.

Three Bells, The. John Greenleaf Whittier.

To-day. Thomas Carlyle.

(The) Train from out the castle drew (from "Marmion"). Walter Scott.

Tray, Old. Robert Browning.

Tree, The. Bjornesterne Bjornson.

## 286 Reading : How to Teach It.

Triumph, My. John Greenleaf Whittier.

Twenty-third Psalm. Bible.

Two Rabbis, The. John Greenleaf Whittier.

Verses by Alexander Selkirk. William Cowper.

Village Blacksmith, The. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

Vision of Sir Launfal, The. James Russell Lowell.

Visit from St. Nicholas, A. Clement C. Moore.

Voice of Spring, The. Felicia D. Hemans.

Waterloo, The Eve of. George Gordon, Lord Byron.

We are Seven. William Wordsworth.

What Constitutes a State? Sir William Jones.

Whittier (lines in "Fable for Critics"). James Russell Lowell.

Why do the Bells at Christmas Ring?  
Eugene Field.

Wind, The. Robert Louis Stevenson.

Wind in a Frolic, The. William Howitt.

Wise Fairy, The. Alice Cary.

Wizard Frost. Frank Dempster Sherman.

Wolsey to Cromwell. William Shakespeare.

Woodman, Spare that Tree! George P. Morris.

Wounded Curlew, The. Celia Thaxter.

Wreck of the Hesperus, The. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

Year's at the Spring, The. Robert Browning.

Yellow Violet. William Cullen Bryant.

Yussouf. James Russell Lowell.



## 288 Reading: How to Teach It.

### GOOD COLLECTIONS OF POEMS.

Bryant's Library of Poetry.

Emerson's Parnassus.

Whittier's Songs of Three Centuries.

Whittier's Child Life in Poetry.

Open Sesame, I.-III. Blanche Wilder  
Bellamy and Maud Wilder Goodwin.

Poetry for Home and School. Anna  
C. Brackett and Ida M. Eliot.

Ward's English Poets.

The Land of Song, Books I.-III.  
Katharine M. Shute and Larkin Dun-  
ton, LL.D.







